



Comitatus, Individual and Honor

Studies in North Germanic
Institutional Vocabulary

By John Lindow

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JOHN LINDOW

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TO KITTY

Contents

PREFACE.	xi
ABBREVIATIONS.	xiii
CHAPTER 1. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY	1
Runic Inscriptions.	3
Skaldic Poetry	4
Eddic Poetry.	6
Laws	7
Sagas	7
CHAPTER 2. THE GERMANIC COMITATUS	10
* <i>ga-sinþ-</i>	12
* <i>druhtiz</i>	17
<i>drótt</i>	26
CHAPTER 3. THE NORDIC COMITATUS	42
<i>hīred</i>	42
Compounds with <i>hīred</i>	50
<i>hīrð</i>	52
<i>hīrðmaðr</i>	55
East Norse <i>hīrð</i>	63
<i>lið</i>	70
<i>verðung</i>	81
CHAPTER 4. INDIVIDUAL AND COMITATUS	84
<i>draugr</i>	84
<i>rekkr</i>	96

<i>drengr</i> and <i>þegn</i>	106
<i>hempægi</i>	112
<i>húskarl</i>	113
CHAPTER 5. HONOR AND COMITATUS.	126
* <i>aizō</i>	126
<i>heiðr</i> , <i>vegr</i> , <i>tígn</i>	128
<i>tírr</i>	129
<i>sómi</i> and <i>sœmð</i>	135
BIBLIOGRAPHY	145
INDEX VERBORUM	165
Proto-Indo-European	165
Sanskrit	165
Avestan	166
Tocharian	166
Greek	166
Latin	166
Italic	166
Gaulic	166
Old and Middle Irish	166
Old Prussian	167
Latvian	167
Lithuanian	167
Old Church Slavonic	167
Slovenian	167
Proto-Germanic	167
Gothic	168
Old High German	168
Langobard	169
Middle High German	169
Middle Low German and Middle Dutch	169
Old Frisian	169

Old Saxon	169
Dutch	170
German	170
Old English	170
Old Norse	171
Old Danish	174
Old Swedish	174
Swedish Dialects	174
Norwegian	174
Faroese	175
Orkney	175
Place Names	175

Preface

This book is a slightly revised version of my 1972 Harvard University doctoral dissertation. My first measure of gratitude is thus to my teachers at Harvard, Theodore M. Andersson, Einar Haugen and T. L. Markey. I am particularly grateful to Markey for his advice and support as my dissertation adviser, a post he filled with energy, enthusiasm and erudition. He also read a draft of the revised version before publication.

Most of the research and writing of the dissertation were carried out in 1971-72 at the University of Uppsala, Sweden, where I enjoyed the generous financial support of a Frederick Sheldon Travel Fellowship from Harvard University. In Uppsala Professor Lennart Moberg graciously made available to me the facilities of the Nordic Institute, supervised my progress on the study, and twice gave me the opportunity to present my findings before his seminar. It is a pleasure to offer him once again, this time in print, my warmest thanks.

My colleague Gary B. Holland has kindly read through the revised text and done his best to save me from the pitfalls of my innocence in the complex field of Indo-European reconstruction. In general I have proceeded from Pokorny's reconstructions not so much from confidence in their validity as in recognition of my own shortcomings. My apology for this technique is that the reconstructions provide only a point of departure.

I have provided translations of the numerous skaldic texts for the aid of readers who may not be familiar with the corpus. For those who are, my pedestrian renderings may provide a smile here and there. But the initiate will, at least, understand the plight of one who attempts to translate the untranslatable.

Finally, my thanks to Alexandra Olsen (typing), Solfrid Johansen (proofreading), Rod Maack (word-index), and John Anderson (patience).

Abbreviations

acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
Akv.	<i>Atlakviða</i>
Alv.	<i>Alvíssmál</i>
Am.	<i>Atlamál</i>
Arn.	Arnórr Þórðarson
art.	article/paragraph
Av.	Avestan
Beo.	<i>Beowulf</i>
Bergb.	Verses from <i>Bergbúapáttur</i>
Bjarni	Bjarni Arnórsson
Brot.	<i>Brot af Sigurðarqviðu</i>
CaS.	<i>Christ and Satan</i>
Chart.	<i>Handbook to the Land Charters</i>
Chr(onicle)	<i>Two of the Saxon Chronicles</i>
Cod. Dip.	<i>Codex Diplomaticus</i>
Da.	Danish
Dan.	<i>Daniel</i>
dat.	dative
dial.	dialectal
DR	<i>Danmarks runeindskrifter</i>
Du.	Dutch

Eg.	Egill Skallagrímsson
EGmc.	East Germanic
Eln.	<i>Elene</i>
EN	East Norse
Eng.	English
Eskál.	Einarr skálaglamm
Ex.	<i>Exodus</i>
Far.	Faroese
fem.	feminine
fn.	footnote
gen.	genitive
Ger.	German
Gldr.	<i>Glymdrápa</i>
Gmc.	Germanic
Goth.	Gothic
Gráf.	<i>Gráfeldardrápa</i>
Grett.	Grettir Ásmundarson
Gríp.	<i>Grípisspá</i>
Grk.	Greek
GSúrs.	Gísli Súrsson
Guðr. 1/2	<i>Guðrúnarqviða in fyrsta/onnor</i>
Has.	<i>Harmsól</i>
Háv.	Hávarðr Ísfirðing
Hdl.	<i>Hyndluljóð</i>
Hel.	Heliand
Hfr.	Hallfreðr vandræðaskáld
HG	High German
HHarð.	Haraldr harðráði
HHj.	<i>Helgaqviða Higrvarðssonar</i>
HHund. I/II	<i>Helgaqviða Hundingsbana I/II</i>
HolmB.	Holmgöngu-Bersi
Hom. Th.	<i>Homilies of Ælfric.</i> Ed. Thorpe

Hornkl.	Þórbiörn hornklofi
Hrb1.	<i>Hárbarðslióð</i>
Hróm.	Hrómundr halti
Hsk.	<i>Hirðskrá</i>
Ht.	<i>Háttatal (Snorra Edda)</i>
Hvm.	<i>Hávamál</i>
Ic.	Icelandic
IE	Indo-European
Lat.	Latin
Latv.	Latvian
Lith.	Lithuanian
Lv.	Lausavísa
Maldon	<i>The Battle of Maldon</i>
Mark.	Markús Skeggjason
masc.	masculine
MDu.	Middle Dutch
MHG	Middle High German
MIr.	Middle Irish
MLG	Middle Low German
MS(S)	Manuscripts
neut.	neuter
NFr.	North Frisian
NGL	<i>Norges gamle love</i>
NGmc.	North Germanic
nom.	nominative
NN	E. A. Kock, <i>Notationes Norræne</i>
NNw.	New Norwegian
Norw.	Norwegian
Nsv.	<i>Nesjavlsur</i>
NWGmc.	North-West Germanic
OCS	Old Church Slavonic
ODa.	Old Danish

OE	Old English
OFr.	Old Frisian
OHG	Old High German
OIc.	Old Icelandic
OIr.	Old Irish
Okík.	Oddr kíkínaskáld
OLat.	Old Latin
ON	Old Norse
ONw.	Old Norwegian
OPr.	Old Prussian
Ors.	King Alfred's <i>Orosius</i>
OS	Old Saxon
OSc.	Old Scandinavian
Ósh.	<i>Óláfs saga helga</i>
OSw.	Old Swedish
Ótt.	Óttar svarti
PGen.	(The Poetic) <i>Genesis</i>
PGmc.	Proto-Germanic
Ph.	<i>Phoenix</i>
PIE	Proto-Indo-European
Pl.	<i>Plácitúsdrápa</i>
pl.	plural
PrN.	Proto-Nordic
Rdr.	<i>Ragnarsdrápa</i>
Rþ.	<i>Rígsþula</i>
Rst.	<i>Rekstefja</i>
Runverket	<i>Sveriges runinskrifter</i>
Scand.	Scandinavian
SE	<i>Edda Snorra Sturlusonar</i>
SGL	<i>Samling av Sveriges gamla lagar</i>
Sigv.	Sighvatr Þórðarson

sing.	singular
Skt.	Sanskrit
Slov.	Slovenian
SmL.	<i>Söðermannalagen</i> (in SGL)
StS.	<i>Sturlunga saga</i>
Sturl.	Sturla Þórðarson
Svarf.	Verses from <i>Svarfdælasaga</i>
Sw.	Swedish
Toch.	Tocharian
Vfb.	<i>Vafðrúðnismál</i>
Vkv.	<i>Vglundarkviða</i>
WGmc.	West Germanic
Wid.	<i>Widsith</i>
WN	West Norse
Wr. Gl.	<i>Volume of Vocabularies</i>
Þblönd.	Þórvaldr blönduskáld
Þdr.	<i>Þórsdrápa</i>
Þjóð.	Þjóðolfr ór Hvini
ÞjóðA.	Þjóðolfr Arnórsson
Þmáhl.	Þórarinn máhliðingr
Þórm.	Þórmóðr kolbrúnarskáld
Þul.	Þula

Chapter 1.

Aims and Methodology

This study examines one area of lexico-cultural relationship for a specific period of a specific language group: it investigates an important social institution of the Proto-Nordic period in light of (1) the vocabulary actually retained in the Old Scandinavian dialects, OIc., ONw., ODa., and OSw., and (2) comparative evidence from the other Germanic and Indo-European dialects. The institution examined is the *comitatus*, first described by Tacitus and thought to have survived until the Middle Ages in Scandinavia. The study comprises an investigation of the terminology for the collective and for the individual member of the group, as well as one important institutional aspect of the *comitatus* relationship, the notion of honor.

For the purposes of this study, a social institution may be defined as *a relationship or behavioral pattern of established importance to a society*. This definition is deliberately broad in order to include all the major elements which permit and maintain cohesion of a society. In practice such elements will generally include *inter alia* laws, customs, practices, forms of social organization, religious expression, and so forth. Clearly institutions vary from society to society, and the institutions of any given society are specific to the culture of that society.

Extensive studies of the social institutional vocabulary of

Indo-European have been carried out by Émile Benveniste (summarized in Benveniste 1969), whose work provided a major impetus for this study and whose lead has often been followed. In approach this study therefore coincides in many ways with the frequent pursuit of Romance semanticists, *l'histoire du mot*, which might perhaps be termed etymology in its broadest sense. The starting point is often the *étymologie d'origine*, or reconstruction at the earliest level, but the major goal is *étymologie d'histoire*, here regarded as examination of semantic relationships at various stages of linguistic prehistory and history.

The theoretical bases of this study thus involve diachronic and synchronic semantics; structural semantics (as e.g. in Lyons 1963) has often proved useful. Also beneficial was the work of Jost Trier (1931, 1934, 1972) and his students Hüsken (1935), Schneider (1935), Trelle (1935) and Wahmann (1937), as well as the theoretical studies of Ipsen (1924, 1932), Springer (1938) and Öhman (1953). Trier's speculations on the *Mannring* (1940, 1941, 1942) have often been stimulating, both methodologically and theoretically, but they have no direct bearing on this study. In etymology the general principles articulated by Indo-Europeanists (Bréal 1893, 1911, Benveniste 1954, Szemerényi 1962) are followed. Etymologies lacking either formal or semantic consistency are accordingly rejected.

The wide range of texts from the ON period demands evaluation of textual material; guidelines based on authenticity, reliability and datability must be observed. Although every text requires individual judgement, certain categories of varying usefulness obviously suggest themselves. Their value to this study and to lexical research in NGmc. in general are as follows.

Runic Inscriptions

Inscriptions in the elder runic *fupark* are palpably the most important texts¹ in investigation of PrN. vocabulary, since they are actually attested from the period under consideration. One difficulty, however, with such earlier texts is determination of the dialect involved: separation of Scandinavian from Gmc. at an early period is often extremely difficult, and the passage from NWGmc. to Scandinavian is not yet fully understood (Haugen 1970: 46-49). A problem common to all the older runic material, too, is simply interpretation of the texts. Semantic study is considerably hampered by even a small amount of uncertainty, and the problem is amplified by the scanty amount and often repetitious nature of the material. Since meaning in any given text is determined by context, difficulty of interpretation increases proportionally as the 'size' or 'amount' of context, in other words the length of the inscription, decreases. And of course the repetitiveness of these texts means that only a small part of the language is accessible. Despite these difficulties, older and transitional runic inscriptions are potentially extremely valuable sources. But on the whole they require caution and must often, in practice, be regarded as merely ancillary tools.

Of very great value, particularly for East Scandinavian, are the inscriptions of the Viking Age. Besides being hundreds of years older than the earliest vellums, indeed a comfortable two centuries before the putative dates of composition of the earliest EN texts, the Viking Age runes presumably give a picture of everyday language not obscured by poetic diction as the early WN texts are. Furthermore, Viking Age runes are easily datable, often to an astonishingly accurate degree, again a great advantage compared with the uncertainty involved

in dating WN poetry. Inscriptions from this period as a rule admit of interpretation far more readily than older runic texts. For these reasons, runic inscriptions from the Viking Period in many ways provide the most satisfactory texts for investigating the vocabulary of that period.

Skaldic Poetry

Chronologically the earlier skaldic poetry corresponds roughly to the runic inscriptions of the Viking Period; in certain cases the composition antedates the runes. Skaldic poetry is therefore of extreme importance for West Scandinavia, which lacks the enormous amount and range of runic activity characteristic of East Scandinavia. Although the recent finds from Bergen indicate that runes were widely used in at least one area of West Scandinavia, this material, besides being unedited—a practical problem—is too late and often too cryptic to be of much use in a study such as this. And, with a few exceptions, Old Norse was recorded almost solely on vellum.

Skaldic poetry is, theoretically, of particular value since it provides a spectrum of texts from the ninth to the thirteenth century. This means that a word can in theory be traced over four centuries, and developments in meaning and use can be carefully plotted. In practice such is indeed often the case, but full awareness of the pitfalls must always be maintained. No MSS containing skaldic poetry antedate the thirteenth century and most are later than that. A gap of up to four centuries between composition and recording must therefore in some cases be reckoned with, and in no case may the extant forms of early skaldic poetry be positively proved to be original. In dealing with these early texts, one cannot lose sight of the long period of alleged oral retention or

transmission. On the other hand, the advance of linguistic science over the past hundred and fifty years makes it not impossible to separate the genuine from the spurious, and many skilled commentators have used various linguistic criteria for dating skaldic texts. Thus exercise of caution can reasonably assure avoidance of gross error.

Literary criteria are also useful. A suitable principle, followed in this study, is to accept longer poems as fairly accurately transmitted, but to regard *lausavísur* with a large measure of suspicion (Jón Helgason 1952: 143).

Still the difficulties are manifold, largely because of the nature of the texts themselves. The extremely complicated diction is far from the realm of ordinary language. Word choice is clearly governed in certain instances by the dictates of the metre: in many skaldic stanzas nearly every important word is involved in the system of alliteration and internal rhyme. Furthermore, the twistings and turnings of the syntax make elucidation of context somewhat difficult. In fact, in some cases even the most skilled commentators can do no more than guess at the very meaning of a stanza, and then semantic analysis is hobbled. Similarly, kennings and poetic compound formations may mask meaning. Perhaps the greatest difficulty for semantic analysis, however, is the large number of poetic terms found only in this corpus and displaying no, or at most few, cognates throughout the Gmc. and IE realm. Whether such words are archaisms or new formations, they nevertheless enter into the various lexical systems and complicate them to a greater or lesser extent. A generally useful rule is that a word attested only once or twice is probably a new poetic formation and therefore need not be extended any further than the lexical system of the given text the word is found in. Beyond this

rule each case must be judged individually. Despite these difficulties, however, the favorable chronological situation makes skaldic poetry indispensable.

In this study the readings of Ernst Albin Kock, *Den norsk-isländska skaldediktningen* (Lund: 1946), have been preferred to those of Finnur Jónsson and others and are followed throughout unless otherwise indicated. Other interpretations were of course consulted; they are noted, however, only where they bear on the semantic analysis. To present variant readings of all stanzas cited was clearly eliminated by the demands of space and the aims of the monograph. Kock was hence arbitrarily chosen for simplicity and completeness. The translations are provided for the convenience of the reader and do not depart from Kock.

Eddic Poetry

Many of the problems facing skaldic poetry affect the poems of the *Poetic Edda* as well, though to a lesser degree. Dating, of course, is a key problem. It is agreed, for example, that certain poems must be very old (e.g. *Atlakviða*) and others rather young (e.g. *Atlamál*), but precise dating is of course impossible. Nevertheless, the Poetic Edda is of great linguistic value in that it must retain many archaic features and is probably closer to old Gmc. poetry than any other extant material. It is, therefore, an important tool.

Of particular importance in dealing with all older Gmc. poetry is the kenning, which can cause words to be used in artificial or at least unusual ways, particularly, of course, in skaldic poetry. But kennings offer an important tool in semantic and etymological research because they tend to fall into kenning systems, which must be very old. In some cases a

word lost elsewhere may be retained or 'frozen' into a kenning system. Similarly a kenning system may contain an older meaning of a word, a meaning which the word no longer exhibits in prose or even as a simplex in poetry. By the same token, complete absence from kenning systems suggests that a word is not old or original but rather a loan or neologism. Thus poetic diction can act as an accurate measure of age.

Laws

Although the laws were recorded quite late in Scandinavia, indeed often not until the fourteenth century, they are frequently of much value. As records of native material they are particularly useful for East Scandinavia, where no native literature is retained from the earlier periods. Furthermore, despite their rather late dates of recording, the laws often retain many evident archaisms, particularly obvious in the form of 'frozen phrases,' alliterative remnants of the period of oral transmission; when such expressions are on occasion encountered in other branches of ON literature, there too they may generally be regarded as older than the texts in which they are found. Another important facet of the laws is their direct treatment, sometimes including contemporary definitions, of various social institutions. In such cases it is normally possible to strip away the later chronological layers and get back to institutions of the PrN. period, though care must be exercised.

Sagas

In the earlier, romantically tinged era of Germanic scholarship, the sagas were regarded as accurate recordings of authentic pagan attitudes and ethics and often formed the basis

for accounts of Germanic or early Scandinavian culture. It is now accepted that they provide useful information about the *Sturlungaöld* and in many cases retain traces of earlier periods, but they are in general neither sociologically nor linguistically conservative. Hence the language of the Sagas of Icelanders may be regarded as typical of thirteenth century Old Icelandic and as a general indicator of medieval Old Norse usage. Roughly the same may be said of the other kinds of sagas, *viz.* kings' sagas, bishops' sagas, *fornaldarsögur*, and others. In certain cases, of course, the language of these texts may be quite revealing, particularly for later phenomena closely treated in and representative of the genre in question; for example, kings' sagas illuminate kingship, bishops' sagas organized religion, and so forth. Translated material presents a special case, since comparison with original texts yields useful glosses.

Diplomas have not been used in this study because they are almost uniformly from a period which is too late to be of value.

If it is accepted that certain genres are representative of certain social classes, then sociological inferences may be drawn from linguistic material. Reconstruction introduces certain problems; as Meillet (1964: 382) has warned: *Dans une certaine mesure, c'est seulement le vocabulaire de l'aristocratie qui est conservé et l'on n'a presque rien des mots populaires.* The problem is not so important in this study, since it deals with the vocabulary of the very highest social classes, composed of chieftains, kings, warriors, and skalds. Nevertheless, the material of the study is the entire fabric of the language of Scandinavia through more than a millenium, and, particularly when sociological interpretation is offered,

it is always recalled that to a certain extent only the richest part of the fabric is still retained.

Chapter 2.

The Germanic Comitatus

In the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth chapters of his *Germania*, Tacitus describes clearly and concisely the institution which posterity has known as the Germanic *comitatus* or retinue. The members of this band of men paid twofold allegiance to a chosen chieftain, providing him *in pace decus, in bello praesidium*. The whole notion of the retinue may, according to Tacitus' description, be regarded from the twin viewpoints of glory and protection. Toward the end of the thirteenth chapter, Tacitus writes of the retinue: *id nomen, ea gloria est*. The fourteenth chapter, however, presents the second and more important half of the theme, which includes the core of the *comitatus* relationship, namely the bond between the warriors and their chosen chieftain: *illum defendere, tueri, sua quoque fortia facta gloriae eius adsignare praecipuum sacramentum est: principes pro victoria pugnant, comites pro principe*. It will be noted that in this passage glory and battle have been fused, a common conflation of Gmc. ethic which will be treated later in the study. The retainers are expected to fight to the death for their chieftain, if necessary, in return for which the chieftain grants them rewards: *nam epulae et quamquam incompti, largi tamen apparatus pro stipendio cedunt materia munificentiae per bella et raptus*. The Latin definition of the Gmc. *comitatus* in Tacitus is thus predicated

on the assumption of martial activity; the trophies and booty of battle are used to reward loyal retainers. Nevertheless, it is a mistake to overemphasize this point, as many commentators do in labeling it the center of the *comitatus* relationship; in Chapter 15, while discussing the actions of the retainers in peacetime, Tacitus points out that it is quite common, and, indeed, expected that they will offer gifts of grain and cattle to the chieftain. On the whole, it seems more likely that what the retainers had to gain was personal glory based on achievement in battle, and the honor of attending a great man. The proposition expressed in the famous words, *id nomen, ea gloria est*, was almost certainly reciprocal. This is clear enough from later Gmc. descriptions of battle and warfare.

On the basis of these few pages of Tacitus, which nevertheless provide the fullest description of this institution and its operation in Gmc. times, the following summary emerges. The Gmc. *comitatus* was a group of men who (1) were (voluntarily) attached to a certain chieftain, thereby creating a bond between the chieftain and each retainer and among all the various retainers acting as a collective. This group (2) provided glory and honor for its chosen chieftain, and to a certain extent for itself, in both peace and war. (3) Their primary function, however, was on the battlefield, where they fought to the death if necessary for their chosen leader.

Such is the situation as Tacitus describes it at the end of the first century after Christ, presumably around the end of the period of Gmc. unity. Centuries passed, the Gmc. peoples split into differentiated linguistic and cultural groups, and the entire fabric of their societies in some cases changed drastically, before this institution came to be mentioned in the Gmc. languages. In this chapter we shall attempt a reconstruction

of the elemental meaning of the Gmc. *comitatus* in the period ca. 100-800 A.D.

**ga-sinþ-*

An initial problem is of course to determine whether Tacitus' use of the Latin terms *comes* and *comitatus* to refer to the individual and the collective corresponds specifically to any Gmc. vocabulary. A fairly common assumption, as presented by e.g. Amira (1913: 188) and Much (1937: 156) is that Tacitus' terminology directly reflects the Gmc. antecedents of, for example, OHG *gisindo* (masc.) 'servant' and *gisindi* (neut.) 'retinue, disciples.' These are formed from Gmc. **ga-*, the etymological equivalent of Lat. *con-*, and a Gmc. root **sinþ-* 'way, path, direction,' presumably parallel to Lat. *eo*, *ire*, which in extended participial form is the second component of the Lat. words (Walde-Hofmann 1938: 1.253; Ernout-Meillet 1959: 202).

The word complex stemming from **ga-sinþ-* is widely distributed throughout Gmc. in two basic forms. A neuter collective *-ja-* stem denotes the group of travelers, and a masc. *-a-* or *-n-* stem denotes the traveler himself, the member of the group. The neut. collective is represented by ON *sinni*, OE *gesīð*, OS *gesīði*, and OHG *gisindi*, but appears to be lacking in Goth. The corresponding masc. forms, with stem formation indicated, would be ON *sinni*, (*-n-*), OE *gesīð* (*-a-*), *gesīða* (*-n-*), OS *gi-sið* (*-a-*), OHG *gasind* (*-a-*), *gasindo* (*-n-*), Goth. **gasinþa* (*-(a)n-*), **gasinþja* (*-jan-*).

The Goth. evidence is interesting. Each word is attested only once, each in the dat. pl. **Gasinþa* is found in II Corinthians 8:19, where it renders Grk. *συνέκδημος*; here it can only mean 'fellow traveler.' Although it is clearly masc. (dat. pl. *gasinþam*), it is impossible to determine the stem

formation, so one might just as well postulate an *-a-* stem **gasinþs*. If Elmar Seebold's (1974a: 1-3) unverifiable hypothesis that *mīþ gasinþam* is a scribal corruption of **mīþ-gasinþa*, a hypercorrect translation of Greek συνέκδημος, is accepted, then the problem of the stem formation is solved. (Of course, both **gasinþa/gasinþs* and the putative **gasinþja*, actually probably **gasinþi*, may be mere calques on the Greek originals, συνέκδημος and συνοδία).

**Gasinþja* is allegedly attested in Luke 2:44. Streitberg (1965: 2.47) glosses it with *Gefährte*, the very same definition he gave **gasinþa*, and which **gasinþa/gasinþs* has been shown to have, answering as it does to Grk. συνέκδημος. An alternation between *-an-* and *-jan-* stems with synonymous meaning has been postulated by Kluge (1926: art. 14), who adduces this example as one of his points of evidence. Nevertheless, it is doubtful that such an alternation actually exists in this case. Leaving aside the impossibility of actually proving that Goth. possessed an *-n-* stem **gasinþa*, the comparative Gmc. evidence suggests that Goth. would have a neut. *-ja-* stem collective **gasinþi* parallel to the other such forms in Gmc. cited above. And the Grk. original bears this out: νομίσαντες δὲ αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ συνοδίᾳ εἶναι . . . which is rendered with *hugjandona in gasinþjam ina wisan* (δέ is omitted). *Gasinþjam* is a direct translation of the Grk. συνοδία, except that the Grk. form is in the dat. sing. and the Goth. is in the dat. pl. The Goth. dat. pl. is best explained as a later scribal error, perhaps induced by analogy with the common masc. *-ja-* stem *nomina agentis*, as *lekeis*, *asneis*, *siponeis*, etc. (see Krause 1963: art. 125.1), although Seebold, who has reached the same conclusion concerning the collective **gasinþi*, has suggested that *in gasinþjam* may be a relic phrase retaining an old instrumental

sing. in *-m* < *-mi* (1974a: 5-12). But he admits that this assumption may be unnecessary and calls for more work (1974b).

In OHG and OE, but not in other NWGmc. dialects, strong and weak masc. forms coexist. The most common explanation for this alternation, as represented by Kluge (1926: arts. 3 and 4), postulates a chronological replacement of the older *-a-* stem in the formation of *nomina agentis*. In the face of the prevailing *-n-* stems, OE *gesīð* and OHG *gasind* are theoretically to be regarded as relic forms. In OE it is difficult to perceive any difference in meaning between *gesīð* and *gesīða*, although it may be observed that the latter, the weak form, is very rare and limited for the most part to glosses, whereas the strong form is found frequently in various kinds of texts. There can be no doubt, however, that *gesīð* functioned as a technical term to refer to retainers. Æschere, the victim of Grendel's mother, is described as being *on gesīðes hād* 'in the state or condition of a *gesīð*' (Beo. 1297), and this quasi-legal formation is mirrored in legal terminology itself. In OE laws the noun *gesīð* has for the most part been replaced by the expression *gesīðcund mann*, synonymous with the simplex, and therefore to be interpreted as 'holding the rank of a *gesīð*.' Full synonymy is displayed, for example in King Ine's Laws, art. 50 (*Ge-setze der Angelsachsen* 1.110):

Gif gesiðcund mon þingað wið cyning oððe kyninges ealdormonnan for his inhiwan oððe wið his hlaford for ðeowe oððe for frige, nah he þær nane witerædene, se gesið, forðon he him nolde ær yfles gestieran at ham.

In other cases, OE *gesīð* evokes a general 'companion,' and is sometimes metaphorically extended to mean 'man.' The glosses for the weak form *gesīða* reveal the same pattern of both a general and a technical side but do not permit any distinctions

to be drawn. It is quite probable that if there ever were any, they were eliminated by confusion between the weak and strong forms and the apparent triumph of the latter, contrary to the general pattern postulated by Kluge.

The OE neut. *-ja-* stem collective *gesīð* is a rarely attested legal term rendering an etymologically predictable 'company.' The lack of the ordinary nom. sing. ending *-e-*, coupled with the frequently recorded final geminate *-ðð-*, is part of a sporadic problem within OE phonology which has so far failed to yield a solution (see e.g. Brunner 1965: art. 229, ann. 2).

OHG alone presents perceivable differences between the strong and weak masc. forms. The *-a-* stem *gasind*, barring glosses found only in the *Murbacher Hymnen*, strongly reflects its origin, meaning simply 'companion,' whereas Otfrid, the sole writer whose works preserve the *-n-* stem *gasindo*, clearly uses the word to refer to underlings or servants.

In OS, the masc. *-a-* stem *gisīð* generally means only 'companion,' but in some cases is specified to *jungero* (<Lat. *junior*, surely influenced by Frankish feudal terminology), as in *thea gesiðos . . . Iohannes giungaron* (Hel. 2799-2800). A similar development may be noted for the collective: *iungaron managa, salig gesiði* (Hel. 2795-96). OS *gisīði* is also used with generalized sense as 'group, multitude,' and to refer to 'household.' OHG *gisindi/kisindi*, on the other hand, attested from *Muspilli* and Otfrid alone, is used only of servants.

In ON the *-n-* stem masc. *sinni* was rather rare. It is, for example, attested with the more original meaning, 'traveling companion,' in the beginning of the fifth strophe of *Völuspá*: *Sól varp sunnan,/sinni mána* (for a full discussion with citation of parallels, see Nordal 1952: 57). Another important passage using *sinni* is *Bjarkamál* 1, where reference is made to

Aðils sinnar. The general lack of evidence renders it difficult to interpret the sense of the word in this strophe. It is, for example, quite possible that reference is made here to retainers, which a powerful king like Aðils could be expected to have. But the context affords no clues. *Sinnar* might just as well refer to all the inhabitants of Aðils' household, or to all the warriors in his entire army. Without more evidence, determination is impossible. Of similar uncertainty is the usage of the word in *Snorra Edda* 71: *en Loka fylgja allir Heliar sinnar*, with reference to the enemies of the gods at *Ragnarök*. Did Hel have retainers? Perhaps, but there is no evidence elsewhere in the mythology that such was the case. Without further evidence, *sinnar* must be regarded as 'companions.'

The neut. *-ja-* stem *sinni* differs from its cognates in being an abstract instead of a collective. It further reflects its origin by rendering 'companionship,' often specified to 'help, support, backing.' It is most frequent in the expression *riða í sinni* 'to offer support'; through the idiom the original meaning shines clearly. In a few cases the notion of 'companionship, aid' has been extended to include a concrete sense, as in *Lond gef ek þér, / lýða sinni* (*Guðr.* 2.33), or *þrøngt sitr þjóðar sinni* (*Ht.* 88). This is purely poetic usage, however. There is no evidence that *sinni* (neut.) was ever employed as a technical term to refer to the *comitatus*, just as *sinni* (masc.) probably never denoted a member of that group.

The evidence may be briefly summarized. Goth. exhibits both the collective and the *nomen agentis*, either an *-a-* or *-n-* stem, with strictly etymological sense, i.e. to refer to 'fellow travelers.' This etymological sense is also revealed for the *-n-* stem in ON at least once; otherwise, in the NGmc. area the collective is reflected by an abstract, and the word group as a

whole basically refers to companionship or aid. In OHG and OS notions of servitude have appeared. Only in OE has this word group definitely become technical in nature, with apparent reference to a *comitatus*. It is possible that this might be a specifically English development, postdating the Anglo-Saxon departure from the continent, but such a supposition will not admit of proof. At any rate, during the period of Gmc. unity, and specifically around the time when Tacitus wrote, **ga-sinþ-* can have had nothing to do with the *comitatus*.

Furthermore, the alleged etymological correspondence between *comes* and **ga-sinþ-* is no more than apparent. Although obvious to a trained eye, the etymology of *comes* is no longer reflected in the meaning, which is simply 'companion, comrade, partner, sharer, etc.;' the sense of motion is no longer present. Moreover, in Latin, a language hardly rich in words denoting 'retinue,' *comitatus* was an obvious, and indeed, practically unavoidable choice; and knowing no Gmc., Tacitus could hardly have tried to capture nuances of meaning, whatever Gmc. word he was trying to render. Once *comitatus* had been employed, the most obvious term to denote the member of the collective was the clearly related *comes*.

On the basis of the above, it may be concluded that it is not possible to determine from Tacitus' use in *Germania* which Gmc. terms were used to refer to the institution of the *comitatus*. The only alternative, then, is to consult the languages themselves and seek the answer there.

**druhtiz*

The comparative evidence presented by the Gmc. languages suggests that the *comitatus* was referred to with Gmc. **druhtiz*. It is reflected in the dialects by ON *drótt*, OE (*ge-*)*dryht/driht*,

OS *druht-* (in *druhtfolk*, *druhtscepi*), MHG *truht/druht* (the word does not, oddly enough, appear to be found in OHG). IE nouns in *-ti-* are usually fem. zero-grade deverbative abstracts (see e.g. Meid 1967: art. 123; Kluge 1926: art. 127; etc.). The primary, full-grade verb in the case of **druhtiz* appears to be attested in Goth. *driugan* 'to go to war' and OE (*ge-*)*dreogan* 'to lead a life, do work, drive'; this verb is often attested in military contexts (Bosworth and Toller 1898: 211-212). ON has the weak verb *drýgja* 'to do, perform, perpetrate.'

The PIE root from which **druhtiz* descended must have been **dhereugh-*. Precisely what this root means is a difficult question. On the basis of the Gmc. forms, a military origin might seem likely. Indeed Green (1965: 270 ff.) has accepted this as a general belief. Although this root does assume military overtones in various Gmc. dialects, certain of its descendants, indeed several from Gmc., suggest that the meaning of the PIE root and, hence, its original Gmc. meaning were more general.

The matter is well treated by Pokorny (1959: 254-255) and need only be summarized here. The Gmc. full-grade cognates ON *drjúgr* 'solid, substantial,' *drjúgum* (adv.) 'very much, in great numbers,' OSw. *drýgher* 'solid, strong, large,' NFr. *dreegh* 'solid, lasting, firm,' lead Pokorny to posit a base meaning 'to hold out, hold together,' which may be used of people as well as things. This is shown especially by cognates from Balto-Slavic (see e.g. Trautmann 1923: 59): OPr. *drūktai* (adv.) 'firm, fast,' *podrūktinai* 'I affirm,' *draugi-* 'with,' in *draugiwaldunen* (acc.) 'co-heir,' Lith. *draũgas* 'companion,' *draũgalas* 'companion,' *draugè* 'with,' *drauge-* 'with (in compounds),' *draugybè* 'friendship,' OCS *drugŭ* 'friend,' *drugy*

'other,' *družina* 'group of travelers, military expedition,' Slov. *družina* 'household, family.'

The contrast between OCS *družina* and Slov. *družina* is particularly interesting with regard to the military aspects of this root, since it shows that the potential for narrowing the sense 'group' to the military sphere was also present in another branch of the IE family, but was by no means part of a general pattern, even within specific older dialect families.

Narrowing to the military sphere did, however, occur in Gmc. We know Goth. *driugan*; it is attested in Timothy I 1:18, where it renders the Greek $\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$. In the same verse is also found *drauhtiwitop* for Greek $\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\epsilon\iota\alpha$. From this root, too, are the secondary verb *drauhtinon* 'to do military service' and the nouns *drauhtinassus* 'military campaign' and *gadrauhts* 'soldier.' The latter must represent specification of the collective **(ga)-druhtiz* to the individual, with change of gender. In Goth., then, the development to the military sphere has occurred. But note that this is really a short step: 'to gather together' has become 'to gather together for a military purpose.' A simple semantic narrowing has occurred. To what extent this narrowing has taken place outside EGmc. will be considered below.

First, however, an interesting alternative etymology proposed by Hans Kuhn (1956: 23-26) must be considered. Kuhn argues that the institution of the *comitatus* never existed with any sort of continuity; hence he attempts to explain away the word **druht-*. The only palpable use of **druht* for *comitatus* in any Gmc. language, he suggests, occurs in *Ynglingasaga* where Snorri equates *drótt* with *hirðsveit* and *dróttinn* with *konungr*. Kuhn argues that this is mere etymological play, equivalent to the *Rígsþula* poet's suggestion that *Kon ungr* 'the young Kon' was the origin of the appellative *konungr*. He then goes on to

observe that the first attestation of **druht-*, *dructe* in *Lex Salica* 13, refers to a bridal procession. Citing various words for 'Brautführer,' e.g. Langobard *troctingus*, OHG *truhting*, *truhtigome*, OS *druhting*, OE *dryhtguma*, *dryhtealdor*, *dryhtealdor-man*, as well as other words having to do with food and drink, Kuhn suggests that all of these words, which are far removed from the sphere of battle, may be derived from a putative **druht-* 'drinking' < **drunh-ti-s*, a *-ti-* abstract from the verb **drinkan*. This etymology would then theoretically account for such usage as OE *dryhtlic* 'splendid,' *dryht-cwen*, *-maðum*, *-sele*, and so forth, including ON *dróttkvætt*, where **druht-* as first component would have the approximate sense 'festive.'

If this etymology is correct, one must then reckon with two Gmc. words **druht-*, one meaning 'warrior band' and one meaning 'drinking.' Such postulation of two sources is methodologically unsound and weakens the argument considerably.

There is, however, a more substantial objection to Kuhn's proposed etymology: it fails phonologically. PGmc. loss of nasal with compensatory lengthening would yield **druht-* from **drunht-*, which differs from the proposed **drūht-* from **dreugan* in the length of the vowel. In this position short and long *-u-* undergo the same development in nearly all cases, which makes it difficult to evaluate the two proposed etymologies; but in one case there is a crucial difference. Notker distinguishes between the two as a result of the following rule, unique to him: *ū > uo/-h*, whereas *-u-* remains unchanged in this position. Now **druht-* is, unfortunately, not recorded in OHG, but its derivatives are. Notker regularly uses *truhting* with the meaning 'Brautführer' (Schützeichel 1969: 199); this was one of the very words on which Kuhn based his proposed etymology. The form *truhting*, instead of **truohting*, certifies that the

vowel must have been short and thus belies Kuhn's etymology.

Kuhn's thoughts do, however, raise an important problem, namely the **druht-* words having to do with marriage, which seem semantically far removed from the notion of the *comitatus*. One possible explanation would be confusion with OHG *trūt*. Such confusion would have been intensified by the not uncommon orthographic metathesis of *-ht-* throughout the Upper and Middle German area; in some cases *-h-* was omitted entirely. Confusion of **druht-* and *trūt* would have been most acute in Middle and Rhine Franconian, where *-h-* regularly vanished in this position (Braune/Mitzka 1967: art. 154, anm. 6). The resultant near homonymy could have approached **druht-* (OHG **truht*) to *trūt* and caused semantic crossing, which might then have spread out to other WGmc. speech areas. It is interesting to note that **druht-* is active in the marriage sphere only in WGmc., never in NGmc. or EGmc., where *trūt*/**drūt* is unknown. Outside HG, *trūt* is found in MLG, where the phonology alone indicates that it is a loan from HG; interestingly enough, descendants of **druht-* are unknown in MLG. Those Franconian dialects where *trūt* apparently originated were well situated to initiate semantic loans to Upper German on the one hand and to North Sea Gmc. on the other. Whatever the origin of **druht-* with the sense 'marriage,' it must be rather early, since it is spread through WGmc.

Kuhn is, however, largely correct in his statement that WGmc. **druht-* in most cases 'ergibt nur ein farbloses "Schar, Trupp"' (1956: 25). In OE, for example, *gedryht/gedriht* refers generally to any large group with no specific overtones in the word itself. The following passage from the religious poetry shows the word parallel to *seo mænigo*, for example:

. . . spræc þa ofer ealle æðelinga gedriht . . .
Him þa seo mænigo þurh gemæne word,

arlease cyn, andswarode. (*PGen.* 2464, 2476-77).

In a similar passage, *gedriht* is parallel to *Israhela cyn*:

þa geseah ic þa gedriht in gedwolan hweorfan,
Israhela cyn unriht don. (*Dan.* 22-23).

Similar usage, in which *gedryht* has a purely general meaning, is found *inter alia* in *Ex.* 304, *CaS.* 176, *Eln.* 27, 736, *Chr.* 457, 515, *Ph.* 348, *Wid.* 118. In nearly all of these passages, *gedryht* refers to the heavenly host, or band of angels, which is quite natural in view of the religious nature of most of the texts. (The influence of Christianity on OE is treated by Keiser 1919 and MacGillivray 1902). In most cases, however, the kind of band is specified by a noun in the gen. pl. governed by *gedryht*. Most frequent is *engla gedryht*, but *eorla*, *folca*, *þegna*, *drymendra*, and *Wiþmyrginga gedryht* are also attested; in these cases the gen. pl. is specific and *gedryht* neutral in meaning. Sometimes, too, an adj. specifies the band metaphorically, as *scir (ge-)driht* (*CaS.* 176), or *leoht gedryht* (*Eln.* 736), both of which refer to the heavenly host. Specification of *gedryht* may also occur through context. Thus, besides the gen. pl. specifier, which may be rather neutral, as in *folca gedryht*, context may indicate the kind of band referred to. In this passage from *Exodus*, the *gedriht* is an army:

Hofen herecyste hwhite linde
segnas on sande. Sæweall astah,
upplang gestod wið Israhelum
andægne fyrst. Wæs seo eorla gedriht
anes modes,
fæstum fæðum freoðowære heold. (*Ex.* 301-306).

Similarly, context indicates in the following passage that the *gedryht* is an army:

Waron hwate weras,

gearwe to guðe. Garas lixtan,
 wriðene wæhlencan. Wordum ond bordum
 hofon herecombol. Ða wæron hearingas
 sweotole gesamnod ond eal sib geador.
 For folca gedryht. (*Eln.* 22-27).

On the other hand, the original military usage of older **druht-* may be glimpsed in such passages. Stripping away the later, Christian gen. pl. specifiers, such as *engla*, one is left with a series of specifiers which all have to do with a band of retainers or an army. These are *eorla*, *þegna*, *secga*, *hæleða*, *æþelinga*, and even *folca*, with its etymological sense 'warrior band, army,' which is still retained in OE in Alfred's Boethius rendition and in the *Blickling Homilies*, and can confidently be postulated for an earlier stage of WGmc. heroic poetry.

Turning to OE heroic poetry, specifically *Beowulf*, one observes that *gedryht* often does seem to refer to a retinue or band of retainers tied to a specific leader, as in:

. . . Hroðgar sæt,
 eald ond anhar mid his eorla gedriht. (*Beo.* 356-57).

The same is true of the following passage:

þæt ic mote ane ond minra eorla gedryht,
 þes hearda heap, Heorot fælsian. (*Beo.* 431-32).

In these passages, the *gedryht* is shown under the control of a chieftain, in the second for the purposes of battle; this fits the definition of the *comitatus* rather well. Nevertheless, even *Beo.* gives something of an impression that *gedryht* may be a neutral term. For one thing, the gen. pl. specifier is always present (*Beo.* 118 *æþelinga*, 357 *eorla*, 431 *eorla*, 633 *secga*, 662 *hæleða*, 1672 *secga*). Although each of these cases specifies a band of nobles or warriors, as opposed to e.g. *drymendra gedryht*, this may be at least in part due to the nature of the

poem: a heroic epic must deal with nobles and warriors. That this may affect even semantic matters is shown by the use of the word *weorod*, which ordinarily in OE means 'group, band of men,' but which the *Beo.* poet uses with the sense 'group of retainers,' as, for example, in *Ic þæt gehyre/þæt þis is hold weorod/frean Scyldinga* (*Beo.* 290-91). Similar usage is also found in *Beo.* 259 and 1215.

It should be pointed out that in the parts of the poem most palpably dealing with the relationship between the lord and his retainers, i.e. the last eight hundred lines or so, describing Beowulf's fight with the dragon, the fleeing of the companions, the loyalty of Wiglaf, and so forth, the word *gedryht* is not employed, nor is any other word which might be taken as a collective referring to the band of retainers. Beowulf sets off for the battle with the dragon *twelfta sum* (*Beo.* 2401); the fleeing companions are called . . . *on heape/ handgesteallan,/ æpelingabearn* (*Beo.* 2596-97); Wiglaf refers to these same cowardly retainers in his famous rebuke with the words *þegn* and *fyrðgestealla* (*Beo.* 2864-91).

On the whole, and perhaps despite the usage in *Beo.*, it seems a logical conclusion that *gedryht* in OE was by and large a neutral term meaning 'group, band of men.' The general nature of *gedryht* is emphasized by the necessity of the various specifiers discussed above, which produce a narrower meaning in much the same way a kenning does. A parallel process is the use of compounds when more specific meanings are required. Some of these compounds, with the putative narrow meanings (these are often no longer recognizable) are *folgedryht* 'group of people, (perhaps originally) group of warriors,' *sibbegedryht* 'band of kinsmen,' *magusedryht* 'band of kinsmen,' *hige gedryht* 'members of a household,' *sibgedryht* 'band of kinsmen,' and *wilgedryht* 'joyful

band.' The generalization of *gedryht* reaches its logical conclusion in the pl., where the word means simply 'men, people.'

The alternation in meaning between the general 'large group, band of men,' on the one hand, and more specific uses, such as 'military band,' is found throughout the words which fill this semantic field in OE (c.f. the remarks on *werod* above), and indeed in the other Gmc. languages as well. One explanation for this is, of course, the poetic diction, which through its parallelism grants equivalence to many words and thus makes them appear synonymous. The problem is compounded in importance by the early dates of poetic texts relative to prose in both NGmc. and WGmc.

Nevertheless, relics of the older usage of **druht-* are still present in OE. They may be seen both in the putative pre-Christian use of gen. pl. specifiers and, as might be expected, in the heroic poetry. Thus, two chronological layers are present, one in which **druht-* deals with war and the *comitatus*, by extension and perhaps semantic crossing also with marriage and festival, and one in which **druht-* has become generalized, *farblos* as Kuhn puts it correctly for one layer but falsely for an earlier layer.

In the rest of WGmc., the tendency toward neutralizing is also visible; **druht-* is limited to compounds in OS and is not attested in OHG, though it later appears in MHG with both technical and general sense.

The neutrality of **druht-* must therefore to a certain extent be a common WGmc. development. The usage in *Beowulf*, where *gedryht* is closer to the *comitatus* than elsewhere in OE, is after all based on the oldest native material to be found in English vernacular, antedating the migration from the continent. *Beowulf*, therefore, probably represents an intermediate stage in the semantic development of **druht-* from *comitatus* to a 'colorless'

sense 'group, band of men,' away from the military sphere which the word occupies in NGmc. and EGmc. and which is so important to the notion of the Gmc. retinue. This development, part of which is represented by the entrance into the marriage field noted by Kuhn for an early time within WGmc., is surely to be dated quite early in the history of WGmc.

drótt

ON *drótt* is one of the few words attested in the very earliest Nordic texts. It is found in ninth century skaldic poetry and is fairly fully represented through the twelfth century, and, though somewhat less frequently, even in thirteenth century skaldic texts. Disregarding kennings and compounds, which will be treated below, *drótt* as simplex exhibits clear consistency in meaning; it was regularly employed to refer to a band of warriors in battle, almost always tied to a specific leader, most often a king or a jarl. This sense is found in Bragi's *Ragnarsdrápa*, presumably one of the very earliest skaldic poems:

Knátti eðr við illan
 Jǫrmunrekr at vakna
 með dreyrfáar dróttir
 draum í sverða flaumi.

Jǫrmunrekr woke as if to a bad dream with the bloody warrior bands in the sword tumult. (Bragi, *Rdr.* 3a).

The same usage may be seen in Þorbjörn hornklofi's *Glymdrápa*, also from the ninth century and one of the earliest skaldic texts:

Gerði glamma ferðar
 gný-þróttr jǫru dróttar,
 helkannandi hlenna
 hlymræks, of tröð glymja.

The foremost in the warriot-band's tumult, dealing harshly with the loud-crying plunderer, caused the path of the wolves to resound. (Hornkl., *Gldr.* 2a).

A third stanza, allegedly also from the ninth century, exhibits this sense as well. There is, however, some doubt about its authenticity; Finnur Jónsson (1912: Bl.18), for example, has labeled it 'næppe ægte:'

Leiddisk þá fyr Lúfu
lengr at haldask
hersa drótt
ok hofðingjum.

The warriors of the leaders then grew tired of defending themselves before Lúfa and the chieftains.

(Þjóð., *Poem about Haraldr hárfagri* 4a).

It is noteworthy that *drótt* is employed with the sense 'military band,' and only with this sense, by the earliest and most important ninth century skalds. Another sense, readily reconcilable with this one, is also present and will be discussed shortly. The unfortunate scantiness of ninth century material makes speculation somewhat risky, but in light of the above usage it is possible to assert that *drótt* had the primary meaning 'warrior band' in the ninth century, at least in the poetic vocabulary. This is extremely important, since the ninth century represents the temporal limit of scholarly penetration. In the above first two cases the leader of the warrior band is specifically mentioned in the text of the poem, in the same helming and directly in the context of the word *drótt* itself, which makes it certain that the warrior band adhered to a chieftain. This therefore fulfills the definition of the *comitatus* reached at the beginning of this chapter. In the strophe allegedly from Þjóðolfr ór Hvini, which may not

be genuine, *drótt* refers to the enemy army with only general reference to its leaders (*hersa*).

Three poets from the late tenth and early eleventh century use *drótt* in nearly identical phrases. In each case the poet, while describing a battle, inserts the line *drótt kom mǫrg á flóttu* (Glúmr, *Gráf.* 2a; Sigv., *Erfidrápa Óláfs helga* 14; Hfr., *Óláfs erfidrápa* 3a—the latter with the wording *mǫrg kom drótt á flóttu* in order to provide an alliterating *m*-). Considering the common nature and subject matter of the three poems, it seems apparent that the similarity is due to literary influence. Of greater importance to this study is the use of *drótt* to refer to a band of warriors functioning in battle. Glúmr uses it to refer not to native troops but to the enemy army in flight, reminiscent of the perhaps spurious helming of Þjóð. No mention is made of a specific leader, and *drótt* stands in a relationship of apparent hyponymy or synonymy with the larger and more indefinite (from a military point of view) *þjóð*:

Dolgeisu rak dísar
—drótt kom mǫrg á flóttu—
gumna vinr at gamni
gjóðum írskar Þjóðir.

The friend of warriors drove off the Irish people to
the joy of the ravens—many of the warriors fled.

(*Gráfeldardrápa* 2a).

Barring the above passage of Þjóð., this is the first indication in Nordic that the institutional use of *drótt* was weakening, as it did in WGmc., particularly OE. Considering the Nordic use of *drótt* in kennings and compounds (to be treated below) as well as its general absence in EN, it is altogether likely that the generalization of *drótt*, i.e. its weakening of institutional sense, began rather early in the North. Nevertheless, such

weakening is hardly the rule within skaldic poetry. Besides the earliest texts, one may point to the other two stanzas employing the line *drótt kom mǫrg á flótta*, or its minor alliterative variant; these stanzas certainly participate in a literary relationship with the similar passage from Glúmr, yet they clearly refer to the leader for whom the *drótt* fights, thereby fulfilling the definition of the *comitatus*. I quote by way of example the earlier of the two:

Þar hykk víst til mjök mistu
 —mǫrg kom drótt á flótta—
 gram, þanns gunni framði,
 gengis þrœnzkra drengja.

I know that the king, who had a battle, certainly missed the Trondheim soldiers—many members of the warrior band fled. (Hfr. *Óláfs erfiðrápa* 3a).

Such institutional usage, with similar context, may also be observed in Sigv., *Erfiðrápa Óláfs helga* 20b.

Arn., *Þorfinnsdrápa* 14, on the other hand, shows the progression of the generalization of *drótt*:

Ýmisst vann sá unnar,
 írsk fell drótt, þás sótti,
 Baldr, eða brezkar aldir;
 Brá eldr Skota veldi.

The warrior fought on various sides; the Irish army, and the British men, fell when they attacked him; the Scottish kingdom was enflamed.

By the twelfth century the use of *drótt* as simplex is definitely diminishing. For the first time the specific sense 'warrior band' has developed out of the military sphere to the more general 'men, retainers,' as in OE in plural rather than singular. The relative lack of attestations in this period

and in the following periods is all the more striking because we have a far greater number of texts. An example of the extended plural meaning of *drótt* occurs in the following helming:

Haukjóðs harða víða
(hótt) norrœnar dróttir
(Þund-regns þeim of vandak)
þengils á bý gengu.

Norwegian men assailed the king from all sides; I
turn my poem to him. (Hallar-Steinn, *Rekstefja* 8a).

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a period which provided roughly half of the extant skaldic texts, the use of *drótt* is greatly reduced. When the word is used, the senses discussed above may be met with, though it is apparent, from the corresponding lack of *drótt* in contemporary prose, that *drótt* is no more than an archaism.

Two stanzas, from the ninth and eleventh centuries respectively, show a related sense of *drótt* not yet discussed. This is in the formula-like expression *hlýðir mér drótt* (Haraldr hárfagri, *Snæfríðardrápa*) and *nemi drótt* (Arn., *Þórfinnsdrápa* 13), where it apparently refers to the audience for which the poem is recited. It is usually assumed that, because of the difficulties in understanding skaldic poetry, the audience was limited, with special experience in this intricate form, in other words, the warriors or retainers who made up the chieftain's household or retinue (see Wessén 1915: 127 ff.). There is, of course, no contradiction between a meaning 'warrior band' and a meaning 'audience for skaldic poetry' for the term *drótt*, since many of the skalds were themselves noted warriors, and even the noncombatant skalds were expected to be present at battles in order to gather information and impressions later to be worked into verse. In this context the metrical term

dróttkvætt assumes obvious importance as the metre used for poems to be recited before the *drótt*.

On the basis of these attestations and without further information, a base meaning 'warrior band usually following a specific leader' must be postulated. The sense 'audience for skaldic poetry' is also to be reckoned with, especially as it is found in one of the earliest texts. These two complementary senses of *drótt* correspond closely to the notion of the *comitatus*, which functions as an institution in both peace and war. In the words of Tacitus, the Gmc. *comitatus* was *in pace decus*, *in bello praesidium*. Apparently a large part of the *decus* of the Nordic *drótt* consisted of poetic activity.

Drótt also occurs in several kennings from the tenth through the thirteenth century. All of these are formed with a base word meaning 'man,' usually with a specific sense 'leader,' and the modifier *dróttar* (gen. sing.), thus producing a kenning for 'chieftain, warrior, man,' depending on just how *drótt* is interpreted. Unfortunately, in these kennings *drótt* seems to be merely a neutral term meaning 'group, band' without further specifications. This is reminiscent of the use of kennings with *(ge-)dryht/driht* in OE poetry. It therefore appears at least possible that the usage in OE and ON represents inheritance from common Gmc. poetic diction, where **druht-* may have been used in man kennings without specification. In ON the term might then have developed differently as kenning element and as simplex. This is in fact the basic principle behind the kenning and *heiti*, i.e. a metaphorical extension or difference in meaning of a given word.

The *Poetic Edda*, which in some ways represents a different social level from skaldic poetry, the pastime of the highest military and courtly circles, shows *drótt* with both institu-

tional and general sense. Institutional use is reflected by *HHund.* I 7, though perhaps not with complete clarity:

Drótt þótti sá döglingr vera,
 qvaðo með gumnom góð ár komin;
 siálfr gecc vísi ór vígþrimo
 ungom fœra ítrlauc grami.

Detter and Heinzel (1903: 2.321) gloss this occurrence of *drótt* with 'eine Menge von (Männern),' thus opting for the general sense of the word; but it seems more likely in this context that the specific sense of *drótt* as a warrior band, or at least as a king's followers or retainers, is being employed. There is first the word *döglingr* 'prince, leader, chieftain, king,' mentioned with this meaning in *Þul.* IV hhl, and appearing later in many god kennings which show the same meaning, e.g. *döglingr gðlinga, heiða, sólar fróns*, etc. Clearly, a warrior band is in a far better position to judge if a man seems to be a chieftain than 'eine Menge von Männern.' There is also the obvious parallelism of lines 1-2 and 3-4 (though line 4 is difficult to read because of the omission of a word in the MS; most editors supply *góð*, which, although it requires emendation of MS *kominn* to a neut. pl., is, nevertheless, the most satisfactory solution). It seems most likely that the contrast between war and peace, especially the king's dual role as giver of victory and plenty, enhances the parallelism of these four lines. The contrast between *drótt* and *gumnom* further develops this relationship. It may well be, too, that lines 5-8 carry the parallelism even further, with the king (*vísi*) leaving the sphere of battle (*ór vígþrimo*) to present the young Helgi with a 'splendid leek' (*ítrlauc*); whatever this symbolizes, it certainly suggests the sphere of vegetation and plenty. Given the Gmc. penchant for parallelism, there is

little reason to doubt the parallel structure of this stanza, indicating that *drótt* here denotes a warrior band. This is consonant with the earlier usage in skaldic poetry discussed above, as is furthermore to be expected in this poem, which Wessén (1927), among others, has most forcefully shown to contain many skaldic characteristics.

On the other hand, *HHund. II*, clearly a later poem with fewer traces of skaldic influence (Wessén 1927), uses *drótt* with the general sense 'men, people.' The attestation occurs in the final lines of *HHund. II* 50: *oc drǫfr drótt gll/draumþinga til*, which may be safely rendered, by general consensus, 'when men go to sleep.' This is particularly strengthened by the preceding lines *er á asclimom/ernir sitia*, which contain a symbol of evening (Detter and Heinzel 1903: 2.384). It should also be pointed out that this stanza contains two extra lines; the last two lines, containing *drótt*, may be an interpolation (Gering and Sijmons 1931: 2.167), as they are the most superfluous. If they indeed do represent an interpolation, this further shows that the generalization of *drótt* in the North was a later development.

The generalized sense of *drótt* is also shown in an attestation in *Vfp. 24*, as well as in the compound *dróttmegir* (*Vfp. 11.12*): both mean simply 'men, people.' The evidence of such wisdom poetry, however, where the poet seeks to display as many 'synonyms' as possible, is often unsuitable for investigation of vocabulary (Güntert 1921 and Watkins 1970 introduce helpful methodology for such cases). In *Vfp. 24*, for example, *drótt* alliterates with *dagr* and provides full rhyme with *nótt*; under such constraints, the use of *drótt* accommodates more the metric necessity than semantic intentions.

The compound *dróttmegir*, contrary to its general meaning in *Vfp.*, is used in the ancient heroic poem *Atlakviða* to refer to

Gunnar's retainers: *Drucco þar dróttmegir/—enn dyliendr þggðo—/vín í valhgǫllo. . .* (Akv. 2). Thus, a poem from the older period and perhaps a different social level shows a different, older meaning.

Drótt is the first component in one other compound, found only in *Atlamál* 10:

Sæing fóro síðan sína þau Hogni;
dreymsi dróttláta, dulði þess vætki,
sagði horsc hilmi, þegars hón réð vacna.

Whatever it means, it is clear that *dróttláta* is a nom. sing. fem. adjective referring to Kostbera. Beyond that, the context is of little use in revealing its meaning, except that one may note that *dróttláta* is parallel to *horsc* 'clever,' thereby indicating that *dróttláta* here refers to some positive quality of Kostbera. Zetterholm (1934: 57), in the most thorough investigation of the poem, suggests 'hövisk,' but does not discuss the matter further. In the most recent treatment of this poem, Dronke (1969: 79) follows Zetterholm with 'queenly.'

Although adjectives in *-látr* are rare in the Poetic Edda, the occurrence of the *hapax* **rakklátr* in *Am.* 65 confirms the validity of the formation of *dróttláta*. Furthermore, *-látr* was fairly common in the prose language of medieval Iceland and Norway as the second component of adjectives. Probably based on *lát* (neut.) 'quality, appearance' (Wessén 1965: 72), it generally forms a compound adjective meaning something like 'with the appearance or quality (of the first component).' In such compounds the first component is most often an adjective as in e.g. *mikilllátr* 'proud, grand' but sometimes also a noun, as in *dramblátr* 'haughty,' based on *dramb* 'arrogance.' Thus a word **dróttlátr* is formally quite possible, especially in a later poem such as *Am.*, which can be expected to correspond

more closely to ordinary prose usage, even in word formation. It should, however, be noted that the first component of adjectives in *-látr* is made up in every case except *dróttláta* by an adjective or an abstract (Finnur Jónsson 1931: 89). This suggests that *drótt* was capable of being regarded as an abstract, perhaps 'retainership.' In exhibiting the qualities of this abstract, Kostbera presumably sums up the nature of the bond or relationship obtaining between the leader and his retainers. In more concrete terms, she adheres to the social protocol which itself both summarizes and provides the basis for the entire relationship. *Dróttláta* is most probably the invention of a single poet, but it is important in showing the possibility of abstraction of *drótt*.

Compounds in which *drótt* is the second component are limited to the poetic language and appear to be independent poetic locutions created by the poet at a particular moment; this is suggested by the overwhelmingly large number of such compounds which exhibit only one example. Indeed only *inndrótt* seems to have made up part of a common poetic vocabulary.

In these compounds, *-drótt* has the neutral sense 'group, band,' and the transparent meaning of the compound is for the most part provided by the first component. Thus, *flesdrótt* (Pdr. 12) clearly means 'rock-people, i.e. trolls, giants,' based on *fles* 'rock.' *Geirdrótt* (Gráf. 10; Finnur Jónsson's reading following the MSS. Kock makes a silent emendation to *geirþrótt*), *herdrótt* (Sturl., *Hrafnsmál* 11), *vlgdrótt* (several attestations), and *ydrótt* (Bjarni 2) are all terms for warrior bands, based respectively on *herr* 'army,' *vlg* 'battle,' and *yrr* 'bow.' *Heraðsdrótt* (Skáld-Hallr 1), of course, refers to the population of a district, and *rándrótt* (Sturl. *Hrafnsmál* 8) to a robber band. These compounds are found from the tenth

through the thirteenth centuries.

The compounds and kennings discussed show clearly that *drótt* could and did function in ON poetic language as a neutral term meaning simply 'group, band of men.' Further specification could then be provided by use of another word, whether in a kenning or in a compound. This is parallel to the usage displayed in OE by the cognate term *gedryht*, which strengthens the possibility that such use was an inheritance from Gmc. poetic diction.

Unlike the compounds just discussed, *inndrótt* is attested a number of times by several different poets over the course of approximately three centuries. It also differs from the others in being formed with an adverb instead of a noun, and the difference in formation parallels a clear difference in meaning. *Inndrótt* is still used as a technical term; it denotes the Nordic *comitatus*, but restricts it spatially. *Inndrótt* refers to the retainers when they are inside. The following *þula*, though of course rather late, presents the duality clearly:

Enn eru eptir
aldar heiti.
Hirð ok gestir
ok húskarlár.
Inndrótt ok hjón
ef ek allt segi,
rúni ok þopti
ok ráðgjafi. (Þul. IV j 6).

The *þula* equates *inndrótt* first with *hirð*, *gestir*, and *húskarlár*, all technical terms having to do with the West Scandinavian court. These words share a sentence. After a logical and syntactic break, a second set of words is introduced, parallel to the first set but domestic in nature. *Inndrótt*

is included among these.

Inndrótta is not attested until the eleventh century. It is used in reference to a chieftain, to whom the group clearly adheres, but the context is not military, as the following passage indicates:

Goðmenn þarf Gunnar
glóðbrjóta at njóta.

Hér's allnennin inni
inndrótta með gram svinnum.

I must enjoy the friendship of the warrior's good men;
here inside there is a mighty band of retainers with
the king. (Ótt., *Höfuðlausn* 2).

In the following strophe of Arnórr Þórðarson, too, the context is domestic rather than military:

Eyðendr frá at elska þjóðir
—inndrótta þín es höfð at minnum—
græði lostins goði et næsta
geima Vals í þessum heimi.

I have heard that the peoples love the sea king next
to the god in this world; your retainers will (always)
remember. (Arn., *Magnússdrápa hrynhend* 19).

The breakup of *drótta* has been observed to begin in the eleventh century. The introduction of *inndrótta* at this time clearly makes up a part of this pattern, seemingly an important part. *Inndrótta* still refers to the band of retainers, but they have, as it were, been moved inside, out of the sphere of battle. The sum of such changes must represent a change in the society using the terms. The old *drótta*, the mobile band of warriors grouped about a powerful warrior chieftain, was no longer an important institution. As it became outmoded and gradually was replaced with newer institutions, the old terminology vanished and new

terminology was introduced. One such term was *inndróttr*, which, I believe, represents an attempt to cope with the domestication of the *comitatus*, its removal from the primary sphere of warfare. But *inndróttr* never became popular and is unattested in prose. It may therefore represent a purely poetic attempt to cope with the changing times on the basis of the older, inherited vocabulary, which was the product of a common poetic heritage. Introduction of *inndróttr*, however, must not have been a radical--or, perhaps, general--enough change. Wholly new terminology was necessary.

Hans Kuhn has suggested (1956: 44) that *inndróttr* (along with *verðung* and *hirð*, but unlike *dróttr*) was one of the few terms which actually did refer to a Nordic *comitatus*. He based his suggestion on the premise that both *hirð* and *inndróttr*, and also perhaps *verðung*, are mixtures of English and Nordic vocabulary which reveal that the later Nordic *comitatus* developed in the Danelaw. The cases of *hirð* and *verðung*, which definitely did not enter Scandinavia via the Danelaw, will be discussed in the next chapter. With regard to *inndróttr*, it should be emphasized that the word is used almost exclusively in domestic contexts and therefore does not refer to the kind of warlike Nordic *comitatus* envisioned by Kuhn, which, rather, is an inheritance of a Gmc. institution and term, *viz.* **druhtiz*. On the other hand, *inndróttr* may show English influence. As Kuhn points out, a possible OE model might be *inwerod*, 'household servants,' which, it may be noted, is also domestic in nature. Kuhn further notes that the use of prefix *in-*, though common in WGmc., as in OHG *ingesinde* 'household servants,' *inkneht* 'household servant,' and so forth, is generally lacking in NGmc. This is a compelling point, but it hardly shows that ON *inndróttr* originated in the Danelaw. On the contrary, it is difficult to accept such reason-

ing, since both the compound *inn-drótt* and the simplex *drótt* are completely unattested in East Scandinavia; the lack of either word in ODa. is crucial. That *inn-drótt* is found only among the WN skalds (the same is true for the simplex *drótt*) suggests that it originated among them, perhaps under OE influence.

In summary, Gmc. **druhtiz* must have corresponded to the *comitatus* as described by Tacitus. The various branches of Gmc. show it functioning within the fields postulated for the *comitatus* according to Tacitus. The military sphere is covered particularly in Goth. and NGmc., with traces in WGmc. The common Gmc. period must have been highly warlike in nature, since the vocabulary admitted several new formations into this semantic field, such as sword, shield, helm, etc. (Schirmer and Mitzka 1965: art. 10 list seventeen such terms), which also make up an important element of Gmc. name formation (*ibid.*; see also Schönfeld 1911).

The aspect of the bond between the chieftain and his men, also among the men themselves, is assured by the Baltic evidence, which shows the root in question functioning regularly in various collectives. The formation of **druhtiz* with *-ti-* suffix also suggests a bond among the members of the group.

The collective nature of **druhtiz* is further assured by the derivative **druhtinaz*, OE *dryhten*, ON *dróttinn*, and so forth. Wolfgang Meid (1957: 78) has shown that when a West IE *-no-* suffixed appellative is a ruler name, it can be expected to be formed on a social collective, as in the well-known pairs ON *þjóðinn*: *þjóð*, Goth. *kindins*: Gmc. **kindiz* (Lat. *gens*), Lat. *tribunus*: *tribus*, *dominus*: *domus*, and so forth, first cited by Saussure (1967: 309 ff.). The structural principle of this pattern assures that the **druhtinaz* was the ruler over the **druhtiz*, a social collective, thus providing the last element

of Tacitus' description, the chieftain.

It should be noted, however, that there is little evidence for postulating a *comitatus* in Goth. The name of leader and band are both lacking. The Gmc. root **dreug-* has been narrowed exclusively to the military sphere, most likely because of foreign influence. By the time Wulfilas came to translate the Bible, the Visigoths had presumably reorganized their society to a great extent along Greco-Roman lines. The **druhtinaz* and **druhtiz* had no place within this new structure and quickly vanished.

Similarly, the importance of the *comitatus* was reduced at an early date in WGmc., no doubt, too, as a result of foreign influence. Traces of the institutional usage of **druhtiz* are to be found in OE poetry and in certain compounds, such as e.g. *dryhthall*, but the general weakening of the concept is presented by the extension of meaning to 'group' in the sing. and 'men' in the plural, as well as by the total absence of the word in the OE laws. The pattern appears to have been similar in OS, while in OHG the word disappeared, surfacing later in MHG but with apparent crossing with the word *trūt*, an early development which drew **druht-* into the sphere of marriage; this usage then spread outward into WGmc.

Confusion with OHG *trūt* may have been one of the primary causes for the development of **druht-* away from its original institutional usage. At any rate, it appears that in OE **gasinþ-* may partly have filled the gap in the institutional sphere. Such replacement was only partial, as the evidence shows, since the institution in question was itself dying out.

Only NGmc. retained the apparently original sense of **druhtinaz* and **druhtiz* for a longer period of time, although the usage must have begun to weaken quite early. Even the

greater physical and cultural isolation of the North, and its corresponding conservatism, could not keep the institution alive, however, past the tenth or eleventh century, at the very latest.

In prose *drótt* is completely unattested, with one important and rather well-known exception. Snorri, as a poet obviously familiar with the word and interested in it as an archaism, writes: *Dyggvi var fyrst konungr kallaðr sinna ættmanna, en áðr váru þeir dróttnar kallaðir, en konur þeira dróttningar, en drótt hirðsveitin* (*Ynglinga saga* 34, ch. 17).

The term *drótt* was therefore out of use in WN by the time of recording of the earliest prose texts; the institution described by it must have been out of use for some time. Snorri knew it only as a part of poetic diction. It is, however, significant that skalds could continue to use *drótt* in poetry, although the word was lacking in ordinary prose usage, even into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This suggests that at a much earlier date, too, the term might well have been an archaism, a *heiti* for *hirð* or *verðung*. Whatever the case, even in skaldic poetry, *drótt* gradually fell out of use, indicating that the institution it referred to was long since defunct.

¹For much of the above I am indebted to T. L. Markey (personal letter, April 19, 1972).

Chapter 3.

The Nordic Comitatus

Hĩred

Drótt was replaced by *hĩrð*, a loan from OE *hĩred* (see e.g. Fischer 1909: 21; also Bugge 1904: 60-78, for a relatively complete but dated account) < **hĩw-r̥ēd* < **hĩwa-r̥ēða*, formally equivalent to OHG, MHG *hĩrat*, Ger. *Heirat*. The first component is Gmc. **hĩwa-* < PIE **kei-uo-* (Pokorny 1959: 539), the adjective 'love, peace' substantized via the suffix -*uo-*; c.f. Lat. *cĩvis*, OLat. *ceiuis*, and Lat. *cĩvitās*, the collective of *cĩvis*. The second component is Gmc. **r̥ēpa-*, the familiar ON *r̥áð* (Scand. *r̥åd*), OS *r̥ād*, OHG *r̥āt* (Ger. *Rat*), in this case employed suffixially.

Schulze (1934: 201, fn. 1) has suggested that the fundamental meaning of Gmc. **hĩwa-*, Lat. *cĩvis* was 'peace in the innermost, narrowest social circle, i.e. the family.' This is further implied by the formation of Gmc. **haim-* 'home,' < PIE **koi-m-*, the o-grade of the same root plus an -*m-* determinant. Furthermore, Gmc. **hĩwa-* makes up the first component of the transparent Goth. calque *heiwafrauþa* (Mark 14:14), one of the translational equivalents of Greek οἰκοδεσπότης. Here it is instructive to examine the semantic difference, as noted by Benveniste (1969: 1.336), between *heiwafrauþa* and *gardawaldans*, the other Goth. term with which Wulfilas rendered οἰκοδεσπότης. The former denotes 'the chief of the family exercising the rights

of hospitality' and the latter 'master, protector of the family group.' The notions of 'society' and 'sentiment' are thus combined in **h₂wa-* 'the circle of the family joined in sentimental alliance, i.e. by marriage;' note OHG *h₂wo/h₂wa* 'spouse,' *h₂un*, ON *h₂ón* 'married couple, household servants,' Du. *huwen* 'to marry,' *huwel₂ijk* 'marriage,' etc. The term **h₂wa*, therefore, defines the sentimental aspect of an alliance within a group, which is also seen in the Skt. cognate *śeva-* 'friendly.' The Vedic relationship between *śeva-/śiva* and *sakhā* 'companion' suggests a kind of friendly behavior among the members of a social collective. Benveniste (1969: 1.337) concludes from the above that the semantic development of **kei-_{yo}/i* may be recovered by comparing its use in Skt., Gmc., and Lat.: (1) Skt. relationship of friendship, (2) Gmc. matrimonial alliance and (3) Lat. sharing reciprocal political rights, allegiance. In the following chapter we shall demonstrate that the third stage of development, represented by Lat., was apparent in the development of OE *h₂red*, subsequently borrowed into ON as *h₂rǫ*. We shall also indicate that the OE development is essentially tripartite: (1) sentimental alliance of members (loyalty), (2) members held by a leader (possession) and (3) members led by a leader for martial activity (mobility of a purpose-defined group). We will also show that the motivating force in this development was the elevation in social status of OE *h₂red* from a purely domestic term of alliance to a technical term denoting a highly structured and much larger social group.

Besides **h₂wa-rēpa-*, attested in OE *h₂red* and OHG *h₂rāt*, Gmc. possessed a word for 'family joined by marriage,' a partial synonym based on the same PIE root. Gmc. **h₂wisk₂a* is a collective formation with the suffix *-₂a-* added to an adj. in *-iska-* (Meid 1967: 197). It is attested for all the NWGmc. dialects

in ON *hýski*, OS *hīwiski*, OE *hīwisc*, OFr. *hīskthe*, and OHG *hīwisci*. Both Gmc. terms were presumably present in NWGmc.; probably the legal, institutional character of the collective alliance conferred by **rēpa-* (note Skt. *rādhnōti*, *rādhyati* 'bring about, pacify,' and OHG *rātslagōn* 'cast a ring about, span the law') in **hīwa-rēpa-* became blurred in time, which led to semantic coalescence, except in OHG and OE where differentiation took place. Note that OHG *hīrāt* spread from Bavarian to Frankish and Allemanian. Whereas both *hīrāt* (also *hīrātbrief*, *hīrāten*, *hīrātguot*, *hīrātliute*, and *hīrātstiure*) and *hīwisch(e)* are well attested in MHG, the opposition is not maintained in MDu. or MLG, which only attest *huwessche* (*huusche*, *husch*) and *hisch* (*hisk*) respectively, but not reflexes of **hīwa-rēpa-*. In OHG, then, differentiation occurred initially in Bavarian, for *hīrāt* had apparently been lost in Frankish and Allemanian until reintroduced from Bavarian. In OE the distinction was a weak one, for *hīwisc* 'family, household, provision for the family' is attested only in Ælfric, ca. 1000; otherwise, it seems to have been replaced completely with *hīred*, itself later lost in the Middle English period. HG is therefore the only area in which full differentiation was carried out, enabling both terms to survive. It should be noted that in areas where only **hīwiskīa* survived, this term could contract the legal, institutional definition of the alliance characteristic of **hīwa-rēpa-*.¹

The first point of the tripartite semantic development of OE *hīred*, i.e. sentimental alliance of members, the loyalty characteristic of a family, is displayed frequently in OE literature, though it is lacking in the earliest poetic texts. In glosses, for example, this meaning is frequent:

Familia hiwraeden *vel* hired.

Paterfamilias hyredes hlaford.

Materfamilias hiresdes modor oððe hlæfdinge.

(Wr. Gl. 73).

Similarly, *paterfamilias* is rendered with *hiredes fæder* (Matthew 10:25) and *hiredes ealdor* (Matthew 20:1).

The term *hūs*, which denotes the physical entity containing and sheltering the *hīred*, is used as a superordinate hyponym over the term *hīred* in several cases. Nowhere is the relationship more explicitly expressed than in *Hom. Th.* 582: *Hit ne biþ na hus buton hit beo mid hired afylled*. In translated passages containing such usage, the relationship often appears in Latin, the source language, as in Luke 11:29: *of Dauides huse and hirede* (*de domo et familia David*), or Matthew 22:45: *ðone geset hus hlafurd ofer his hired* (*quem constituit dominus suus supra familiam suam*). It will have been noted that in several of these passages, point (2) of the proposed semantic development of OE *hīred* is also present, i.e. adherence to a leader, the principle of possession.

Such a sense, most apparent in the glosses for *paterfamilias* and *materfamilias*, was frequent in OE. The leader of the *hīred* could in some cases be a man of extremely high social standing, sometimes even a king. This occurred fairly often, as in King Alfred's *Boethius* 36:1: *on sumes cyninges hirede* (*in tante patris familias dispositissima dome*), but note that *cyning* corresponds to *paterfamilias*. Similar usage is found in *Ors.* 282: *Lucinius behead ðæt nan cristen mon ne come on his hirede* (*Lucinius omnes Christianos e palatio suo jussit expelli*) where *hīred* actually answers to Lat. *palatium*. This usage is important because it reveals a potential for *hīred* to denote extremely large, structured households of an institutional nature.

For example, after the introduction of Christianity, a semantic narrowing occurred, and in certain contexts *hīred* came to mean 'monastery, religious order.' This is the case, for instance, in *Hom. Th.* 1.314: *se halga hyred wæs wunigende anmodlice on gebedum*, as well as in *Chart.* 574: *se hīrd on seynt Eadmunsbiri*, and *Cod. Dip.* 2.3: *an gewitnesse ðes hiredes æt cristes circean*.

Thus, what apparently happened was that *hīred* rose in social status; initially denoting any household or family, it came to be used of the largest and most important structured, institutionalized households. Such a development reached its culmination when *hīred* was used of the household of the king of England himself. The *Chronicle* entry for 1086, for example, refers to King William I: *Wille we be him awritan swa swa we hine ageaton, and oðre hwile on his hirede wunedon*.

The OE laws reveal clearly the chronology of this development. In its earliest attestations, *hīred* denotes an ordinary household composed of an extended family, as in this passage from King Ine's Laws 7.1 (late seventh century): *Gif he ðonne stalie on gewitnesse ealles his hiredes, gongen hie ealle on ðeowot* (*Gesetze der Angelsachsen* 1.92). Institutional usage of the sort being discussed here does not appear until the late ninth century, when in King Alfred's Laws 2 the term *hired* is used to refer to a monastery. It is not until the mid-tenth century, in King Eadmund's Laws 4, that *hired* denotes the extended household of the king.

In the eleventh century *hīred* seems to have the modern sense of the king's court; it refers, in other words, purely to the men and particularly the customs involved, with little domestic sense. The idea of the family joined by marriage or the household has vanished, and instead the *hīred* appears to be moveable at a fairly short notice, as in the following *Chronicle* passages

from 1085: *Se cyng heold ðær his hired v. dagas . . . Her se cyng heold his hired on Winuceastre to þam Eastran*. Such usage continued into the twelfth century, as *He ferde to Wudestoke and his biscores and his hīrd eal mid him* (*Chronicle* entry for 1123), or *Ðis gear heald se kyng Heanri his hīrd æt Cristes mæsse on Windlesourse* (*Chronicle* entry for 1127).

Such is the development of OE *hīred* in prose. Important and interesting conclusions may, however, also be drawn from its use in poetry, which appears to have been somewhat different. *Hīred* is not found in the oldest OE poetic texts, as, for example, *Beowulf*, and it is rare indeed throughout the entire poetic corpus. The oldest attestation is probably in the poetic *Genesis*, lines 2312-15. The Lord is speaking to Abraham:

þu scealt halgian hired þinne.
 Sete sigores tacn soð on gehwīlcne
 wæpnedcynnes, gif þu wille on me
 hlaford habban . . .

Here *hīred* refers to Abraham's followers, the people of Israel. The usage, however, appears institutional. The *hīred* adheres directly to Abraham (*hired þinne*). The use of *halgian* with an apparent reference to cult activity presupposes a limitation on the size of the *hīred*. The specification of the limitation is that only males are to be included. The result of this activity will be recognition of the Lord as the true leader of Abraham and his followers, the *hīred*.

A passage of uncertain age which may show similar usage of *hīred* is the following, from Riddle 59 of the *Exeter Book*:

Word æfter cwæð
 hring on hyrede hælend nemde
 tillfremmendra. (Riddle 59.5-7).

Outside of these two passages, *hīred* seems to be limited in

poetry to *Christ and Satan*. The usage there, too, is institutional in nature. The *hīred* 'belongs' to the two protagonists of the poem; this is specified by use of the verb *gehealdan* in one case:

þæt hie woldon benæman nergendne Crist
 rodera rices, ah he on riht geheold
 hired heofona and þæt halige seld.
 (CaS. 345-347).

In other cases possessive pronouns are employed, as in the following passage, where the loyalty of Satan's *hīred*, composed of those angels who aligned themselves with him in his proud attempt to rival the glory of God, is ironically mentioned; Satan's *hīred* will accompany him to Hell:

þa he to helle hnigan sceolde,
 and his hired mid hine . . . (CaS. 374-375).

Christ's *hīred* is also referred to as *his hīred*:

Leaðað us þider to leohte þurh his læcedom,
 þær we moton seolfe sittan mid drihtne,
 uppe mid englum, habban þæt ilce leoht,
 þær his hired nu halig eardað,
 wunað in wynnum . . . (CaS. 588-592).

Finally, in the remaining passage employing *hīred* in this poem, the mobility of the *hīred* is concretely stressed through the use of the verb *lædan*:

Nu ic þe halsige, heofonrices weard,
 for þan hirede þe ðu hider læddest,
 engla preatas. . . (CaS. 420-422).

These passages are important: they reveal that *hīred* was a technical, institutional term in OE poetic language from around 800 A.D. (for the dating of this poem see especially Clubb 1925: lvi-lx). The equivalent to the use shown in this poem is not,

strictly speaking, to be found in prose. The closest parallels perhaps refer to the king's court and its mobility, found in the *Chronicle* passages. But these passages are late; indeed, they postdate the Norman conquest.

Christ and Satan, and the other few passages discussed, stand alone in OE poetry in the use of *hƿred*. Since *hƿred* is not found in the older heroic poetry, we may assume that its use in this Christian drama was a later development, perhaps the invention of a single poet, certainly a Christian. However, the riddles, which attest one of the few uses of *hƿred*, were written for the amusement of the learned and therefore are products of the monastery.

In summary, OE *hƿred* initially referred to large families or households. As time passed, larger and larger households, of both a secular and religious nature, grew up; *hƿred*, originally a term for 'family joined by marriage,' was still used with this sense, often with the specification of a leader who 'possessed' the *hƿred*. This represents an obvious raising in social status for the word *hƿred*. It reaches the pinnacle of social status in the eleventh century, when it is used to describe the mobile, highly structured court of the king of England, a use suggested in earlier literature for kings as literary characters, but first carried out in reality at this late date. The uses, however, do not suggest the strong bond between the ruler and his followers which is apparent in the poetic passages cited, clearest in *Christ and Satan*. This indicates a fundamental difference between poetic and prose or everyday usage. One last important point is that the *hƿred* at every level thus far described was completely domestic in nature, never an instrument of war. This removes it entirely from the sphere of the Gmc. *comitatus* or **druhtiz*.

Compounds with hīred

The compound *hīred-menn* appears to have been used to denote the members of the *hīred*. Generally, these individuals were simply members of a large family or household, but the term was also sometimes used institutionally, as in Genesis 50:7, where the English translator renders *senes domus Pharaonis* with *Pharones yldestan hiredmen*. The nature of a semi-feudal relationship is stressed in an eleventh century legal passage: *hæbbe ælc hlaford his hiredmen on his agenum borg*, from King Cnut's Secular Laws, Thorpe 1.282.

Furthermore, unlike the simplex *hīred*, the derivative *hīredmenn* is capable of assuming a warlike tone. This occurs, for example, in the *Battle of Maldon*, thought to date from the year 991: *ongunnon þa hiredmen/heardlice feohtan*. . . (*Maldon* 261). It is difficult to assess the reliability of the usage. On the whole, the *Maldon* poet is faithful to the old heroic style, although perhaps more so to the tone than to the diction; at any rate, a few ON loans may be detected, e.g. *grið* (line 35) and *dreng* (line 149). But centuries had passed since the period of heroic poetry in England. It seems more important that *hīred* or *hīredmenn* is not attested in the three thousand lines of *Beowulf*, in *Waldere*, *Deor* or the *Finnsburg* fragment, than that it is found in this late and frankly imitative poem. In prose, *hīredmenn* does not seem to be attested with this sense until 1087, when the *Chronicle* reports *his hiredmen ferdon ut mid feawe mannan of þam castele and . . . ofslogen and gelæhton fif hundred manna*.

This is the third stage of the development of this institution, *viz.*, members led by a leader for martial activity. The

usage, however, is far more weakly attested than the first two stages of the development. The martial use of the term *hīredmenn* does not necessarily prove that the *hīred* itself was a war-like institution. The *hīredmenn* who fought in battle may have been only one part of the *hīred*; or the derivative compound may be based on a widely extended use of the primary simplex, as was, for example, the case with ON *húskarl* formed from *hús*. Furthermore, martial usage of *hīredmenn* is extremely late; so late, in fact, that Nordic influence is not beyond possibility. The dating of *Maldon* to 991, the year of the battle, is based on internal evidence, but since the poem as we have it is incomplete and retained only in an eighteenth century copy, such dating need not necessarily be accurate. If *Maldon* is dated later, a loan from Nordic would be quite likely. The possibility of later composition of *Maldon* is strengthened by the continuation of alliterative poetry into the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as witnessed by *The Death of Alfred* and *The Death of Edward*, entered in the *Chronicle* for 1036 and 1065 respectively, and *Durham*, composed in the twelfth century. And even if the dating of *Maldon* to 991 is accepted, it is conceivable that *hīredmenn* there may have been affected in its usage by ON *húskarl*.

OE also shows a compound *hīredcniht*, generally used of household servants but also making up part of feudal terminology. In the following homiletic passage, for example, it is parallel to *þegen*: *þurh Paules bodunge gelyfdon ðæs caseres þegnas and hiredcnihtes* (*Hom. Th.* 1.374).

As second component *hīred* appears in several OE determinative compounds. The precise meaning of these is thus specified by the first component, as in *nunnhīred* 'group of nuns, sisterhood,' *preosthīred* 'group of priests, brotherhood,' and *wifhīred* 'group of women, female domestics.' Here the first stage of the seman-

tic development of *hīred*, viz. 'sentimental alliance,' is attested. In one such compound, however, the second stage is present: *bisceophīred* does not refer to a group of bishops, but rather to the collective of monks under the dominion of a single bishop.

Hirð

Hirð appears to have entered Scandinavia during the early decades of the eleventh century; the earliest datable attestations are found in the *Nesjarvísur* of Sighvatr Þórðarson, composed, according to *Heimskringla*, the summer after the battle of Nesjar (*orti þegar um sumarit eptir orrustu flokk þann, er Nesjavísur eru kallaðar*, in *Óláfs saga helga* 61), which, according to Icelandic annals, took place in 1015 or 1016. Hofmann has suggested that Óláfr may have brought the core of this *hirð* from England, thus providing the source of the loan (1955: 57); this speculation places too much strain on the laconic skaldic evidence.

An undatable attestation, conceivably earlier, is found in the fourth stanza of the anonymous poem *Bjarkamál*. A *terminus ante quem* for this poem is presumably represented in 1030, when the poet Þórmóðr Kolbrúnarskáld recited it before the battle of Stiklastaðir. The poem is, however, considerably older, and parts of it must be assumed to stem at least from the tenth century. Problematically *hirð* is found in the fourth stanza, the first of three which catalogue gold kennings. It is doubtful that these stanzas were part of the poem from the beginning (Jón Helgason 1952: 87; Einar Ólafur Sveinsson 1962: 455). The fourth stanza is:

Gramr enn gjøflasti
gæddi hirð sína

Fenju forverki,

Fáfnis miðgarði. . .

If this stanza is not an interpolation, the king (*gramr*) referred to is Hrólfr kraki, and the situation being described is the stock scene of the chieftain rewarding his loyal retainers with gold, an important part of the *comitatus* relationship. The setting is presumably just before a great battle, and one assumes that the gifts of gold are designed to increase the loyalty of the warriors and bring about prestigious feats on the battlefield. The *hirð* in this case would, therefore, be synonymous with *drótt* as it has been observed in skaldic poetry: a group of retainers pledged to a single leader whose primary importance is on the field of battle. It should be stressed that if this stanza is an interpolation, we cannot ascertain the context of the attestation; the degree of probability of this supposition reduces, correspondingly, the importance of the passage to our argument.

In the first datable attestations, *hirð* functions completely as a synonym for *drótt*:

Fekk meira lið miklu
mildr an gløgggr til hildar
hirð þás hugði forðask
heið þjóðkonungs reiði.

The generous one got a much greater force for the battle than the stingy one did, when the joyful retainers (*hirð*) thought to avoid the king's anger. (Sigv., *Nsv.* 2a).

Hirð Áleifs vann harða
hríð, (enn svá varðk bíða)
peitneskum feltek, (páska)
palmsunnudag, hjálmi.

The retainers (*hirð*) of Áleif fought a hard battle on Palm Sunday, (thus yet did I have to await Easter),
I wore a Peitnesk helmet. (Sigv., *Nsv.* 14a).

Here the *hirð* is seen functioning in battle for a specific leader, thus displaying synonymy with *drótt*. Sighvatr uses *hirð* also in his *lausavísur* with similar meaning (*Lv.* 18). -

A few decades later in the eleventh century, *hirð* is used by Arnórr Þórðarson, again synonymously with *drótt*:

Hvárntveggja sák hoggva
hirð á Pétlandsfirði
—ór þrifusk mein at meiri—
mínn auðgjafa sína.

I saw both of my gift-givers cut down each other's men (*hirð*) at Pettlandsfjord—because of this my sorrow grew bigger. (Arn., *Þórfinnsdrápa* 2a).

Arnórr also uses *hirð* in the second stanza of his *Magnússdrápa drottkvæð*.

Þjóðolfr Arnórsson, Arnórr's contemporary, also employed *hirð* with the same sense, in an environment typical of *drótt*:

Flest vas hirð, sus hraustun
hrafns fæði vel tæði,
dauð, áðr döglingr næði,
døkks, á land at stökkva.

Most of the men (*hirð*), who served the brave warrior, were dead, before the king was able to reach land.

(ÞjóðA., *Sæstefja* 15a).

The usage continued into the twelfth century. The poet Hallar-Steinn, for example, used *hirð* three times in his *Rekstefja*, in stanzas 15, 18, and 32, always in the above sense. In fact, formal synonymy between *drótt* and *hirð* may be noted in *Rst.* 18, where *drótt hné* and *hirð fell* are paratactic parallels

with synonymous meaning.

This does not necessarily mean that *drótt* and *hírð* were identical. Although they show synonymy in certain skaldic passages and appear to have been synonyms throughout the skaldic corpus, there is on methodological grounds alone no reason to assume synonymy in all environments. We should also recall the frequently mentioned Gmc. penchant for parallelism, which tends to create functional synonyms in poetic contexts. Such synonyms might be quite impossible, or at least highly unusual, in prose, and, by implication, in daily speech.

Unlike *drótt*, *hírð* is infrequent in kennings, probably because of its late entrance into the North, where some features of poetic diction (usually traditional and fixed features) may be traced back at least to the common Gmc. period, and in some cases to IE (see Schmitt 1967 and 1968). An inherited word, like *drótt*, could be expected to play a large part in such a system, and it does, particularly in OE and ON. However, it would be difficult for a late loanword to enter into and take part in this century-old system. Thus in ON poetry *hírð* functions only as a referent and is seldom used in an extended or metaphorical sense. The only exception appears to be the kenning *himla hírð* for 'angels,' used by the twelfth century poet Eilífr Kúlnasveinn. In OE poetry the same kenning is attested (*hīred heofona*, *CaS.* 347); it is the only kenning using *hīred* in OE. This strongly suggests that the loan of OE *hīred* was initially a literary phenomenon.

hírðmaðr

Similarly, *hírð* is quite rare in poetic compounds: the frequent epithets with initial *hírði-*, as *hírðiáss*, *hírðidraugr*, *hírðisif*, and so forth, all circumlocutions for humans or the

gods, are based on other elements, such as the native verb *hírða* < **herðian*. The most important of the few poetic compounds based on *hírð* is the familiar and important *hírðmaðr*, which obviously means 'member of the *hírð*.'

The first attestation of this word is also in the poetry of Sighvatr, where it is used in the same sort of contexts as those typical of *hírð* and *drótt*:

Búa hilmis sal hjólmum
hírðmenn, þeirs svan grenna,
(hér sék) bens, ok brynjum
(beggja kost á veggjum).

The retainers (*hírðmenn*), who fed the raven, build the hall of the prince with helmets and byrnies; here I see both kinds on the wall. (Sigv., *Austrfararvǫlsur* 16a).

Similar usage is attested in the slightly later poetry of Haraldr Harðráði (15), Arnórr Þórðarson (*Magnússdrápa dróttkvæð* 17), Þórkell Skallason (1), and others, into the twelfth century.

The few other skaldic compounds which are based on *hírð* (*hírðprúðr*, *hírðvist*, etc.) are late and limited to the religious poetry.

In ON prose, we have noted, *hírð* is the term normally used to describe the retinue of great kings. The *hírð* was a large corporation with its own officers, structure, and codified rules; texts from the late twelfth century in Denmark (*Vederlov*) and thirteenth century in Norway (*Konungs Skuggsjá*, *Hírðskrá*) show the intricate structure of the *hírð* with its specialized nomenclature and carefully maintained divisions of labor and status. Although the two legal texts are late, their origins must in some cases extend back some distance in time, although the same

cannot be said for the Norwegian courtly textbook. The important point is that the *hírð* was a great deal more than a band of warriors who were pledged to a given chieftain.

Although the *Hírðskrá* reports that a *hertugr* and *jarl* could also have a *hírð*, provided it was smaller than the king's, in practice only the king must have had such a following, at least in the High Middle Ages. Thus, in *Egils saga* (31), when Hárekr is slandering Þórólfr Kveld-Ulfsson, he says *hann hefir ok hírð um sik sem konungr*. From this one can conclude that for a mere chieftain, even a *lendr maðr*, to have a *hírð* was unusual indeed. The restriction of the *hírð* to kings, or at least to the wealthiest and most powerful, is another important difference between *drótt* and *hírð*. During the period of Gmc. migration and the early Viking Age, it must have been common for smaller chieftains to have a *drótt* about them. But certainly by the height of the Viking Age, around the time of Knútr the Great's conquest of England (1018), only a king could afford to maintain an enormous, complicated group like the medieval *hírð*.

The development of the *hírð* into a corporation and its subsequent growth in Norway are witnessed—if the accounts are trustworthy—in *Heimskringla*. Ch. 57 of *Óláfs saga helga* reports that Óláfr built a *konungsgarðr* in Níðaróss, with a large *hírðstofa*. The positions of the various *hírð* officers are described: the *hírðbyskup* has the seat of honor, followed by various advisors, higher *hírð* officers, and others, all according to protocol. The size of the *hírð* is placed at sixty *hírðmenn*, thirty *gestir*, and thirty *húskarlar*, and it says that Óláfr *setti þeim mála ok lög* (Ósh. 73); presumably some of these laws found their way into the *Hírðskrá*, in a form dating from Magnus Lagabætir's revision of the legal codices, ca. 1274-77.

It is immediately obvious that this institution is quite

different from that of a small, mobile band of warriors owing military allegiance—to the death—to a chieftain. Instead, one is confronted with a band of one hundred twenty men, ranked in various levels, with a bishop at the top. Nothing is mentioned about battle, but it is stated that these men are resident with the king: *í garðinum var ok mikill skáli, er hirðmenn sváfu í* (Ósh. 73). This, too, might vary from the *drótt*, since there is little evidence that the group made up a part of the household of the leader.

Óláfs saga kyrra (207) reports that the king had a following of one hundred twenty (*hundrað*) *hirðmenn*, sixty *gestir*, and sixty *húskarlar*, or double the force which Óláfr Haraldsson had. The entire group of two hundred forty men is said to have accompanied Óláfr kyrrri on his banqueting tours of the country. Whether this early thirteenth century account of the growth of the *hirð* is correct, it surely presents the essentials of the development.

Konungs Skuggsjá and *Hirðskrá*, which can be assumed to represent the contemporary situation, place no limit on the size of the *hirð* but give a detailed description of the duties, responsibilities and privileges of the various members, which presupposes an enormous group. With its obvious continental parallels, *Konungs Skuggsjá* brings the *hirð* squarely into the midst of European courtly tradition. Thus by the thirteenth century the Norwegian *hirð* was indeed a Nordic reflection of the glory of the great medieval courts of Europe.

It is apparent, then, which sense of the term *hīred* was borrowed from OE to become ON *hirð*, namely, the sense of the great secular household, high on the social scale. Thus in Scandinavia only the pinnacle of society was capable of maintaining the institution, in the end only the king himself. That

the *hírð* in one sense was the king's household is apparent from the description from *Óláfs saga helga* of the household arrangements Óláfr is said to have made for his *hírð*, namely, providing them with a *hírðstafa* for daily use and a special *skáli* to sleep in. The sagas are replete with stock scenes describing the arrival of the doughty Icelfander at the king's court, his acceptance into the *hírð*, and his stay with the king. Underlying all this is the notion of the *hírð* as a domestic arrangement, a great secular household.

Óláfs saga kyrra presents the term *hírð* in a sense parallel to that of OE *hīred* in the *Chronicle* passages noted earlier. The *Chronicle* entries, and the reign of Óláfr kyrrr, postdate the loan itself, and may well reflect mutual influence. The growth of a powerful kingship with its attendant institutions in Scandinavia must have been roughly parallel to the same development in England. Thus, the sense 'mobile court which accompanies the king on banqueting tours throughout the country' can have arisen after the time of the loan, under parallel circumstances and with mutual influence.

In its earliest attestations *hírð* shows a sense which is not generally present in the use of *hīred* in everyday language of the time, namely, the strong sense of adhesion to the leader and the influence of warfare, the second and third stages of the development of *hīred*. The role of martial activity will be taken up shortly, but we should recall that the sense of the second stage was, in fact, strongly present in OE poetry. Thus at the time of the loan, two senses were borrowed with the OE term *hīred*. The first is that generally found in prose texts and laws, namely that of the secular household of a great man of high social standing. The second is the generally poetic sense of the group of men pledged strongly and institutionally

to a given leader.

The reasons for the loan are many and varied; some have been mentioned already. Without question, the great structural changes which Scandinavian society underwent at this time were of primary importance, particularly the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few men and the growth of a powerful monarchy, contemporary with the introduction of Christianity. The development of a strong, centralized kingship brought with it a new kind of *comitatus*, if the word may still be used, immeasurably larger, stronger, and more structured, based to some extent on foreign models. This is quite different from the old Gmc. *drótt*, the simple warrior band owing allegiance to a chieftain; indeed, it represents another world. Nevertheless, the origins of the Nordic *hirð* rest firmly on the Gmc. *drótt*.

An important correlative is the primary nature or function of the two institutions in question. The Gmc. *drótt* was primarily an instrument for waging war; the honor and glory which it guaranteed in peacetime were largely based on the exploits of war. On the other hand, the Nordic *hirð* was primarily domestic in nature; the king waged war with his *herr* or *líð*, and himself was a great deal more than the Gmc. warrior chieftain had been. The king was ruler of an entire people, a statesman, a leader in the Christian community, as well as a warrior and the commander of an army.

Another impetus for the loan must have been social status. The new, all-powerful king's retinue was different from the *comitatus* which any chieftain could claim, and so a foreign term, i.e. a new word, was appropriated for the new institution. Old English *hƿred* moved up the social scale and must have become a word of high social standing; this would make it ideal for the new institution.

Similarly, *drótt* fell in social status. Though *drótt* itself is unattested outside the skalds, the derivative *dróttinn* is found throughout the North. It was, on the one hand, appropriated by the Church and used for 'Christ.' But such usage in Scandinavia must have been imported by missionaries. WN *dróttinn* in the sense 'Christ' must surely be based on the same usage in OE; the EN model may be OE, or it may be OS, since Ansgar, the first missionary in this area, was sent from a monastery in North Germany (for a recent general treatment see Palme 1959; the vocabulary is treated by Thors 1957).

Dróttinn continued to be used, however, in worldly contexts, and here one detects a certain falling in social status. In WN prose it is used of the head of a household, never of the king. This sense is found in Biblical literature, which may not be a true representation of the state of affairs, but the compound *lánardróttinn* is used in saga literature to denote the man who owns a large amount of land, not necessarily even a noble.

In medieval Sweden, any landholding farmer called himself a *drotten*, which distinguished him from the landless peasant, called a *landboe*; the distinction may be clearly seen in *Östgötalagen* (BB9, pr. 1). The same is true for ODa.: in *Skånelagen* the landowner is called a *jorþædroten*. And just how far this process could go is seen when the churchwarden begins to call himself *kirkíudroten*, as he did apparently at least in Västergötland and Småland (see *Västgötalagen* and *Smålandslagens kyrkbalk*, SGL 6).

Further proof of the lowering of *dróttinn* is in this OSw. passage: *sat sampson í sit drotzäte* (*Sagan af Didrík af Bern* 51). This is the only OSw. attestation of the word *drotsäte*, which is usually taken to be a loan from Norwegian. But the Norwegian original, in this case, has *háseti*, suggesting that

drotsäte was a native Swedish word. The evidence for this assumption has recently been strengthened by S. Fries (1969), who has found in Närke dialect the term *dröste*, which refers to a bench in a peasant's cottage, i.e. 'en bänk, varpå bonden sover middag.' There is also the word *drösteborst*, which denotes a kind of fancy pillow on the bench opposite the door in an old peasant dwelling; both of these words appear to have died out in the eighteenth century. Fries is unable to cite any relevant parallels.

In *Arboga Stads Tänkebok* (1.82), in the entry for February 6, 1458, the following passage occurs: *ok satte sig nidan drossætis stakkan ok sade. . .* This must be a further attestation of the word *drotsäte*, and must certify that Swedish possessed such a word.² Since *drotsäte* must descend from **drotensäte* (with ellipsis), this again illustrates the fall of *dróttinn* in social status. Here the material outside of *Sagan af Didrik af Bern* is of special importance, since it attests the word in contexts far removed from the court.

Word geography shows clearly that *hírð* entered Scandinavian via WN, particularly via Norwegian. Classical WN prose, and poetry to a somewhat lesser extent, attests that *hírð* is frequent in many situations, as a glance at the dictionaries or the texts themselves affirms. Of importance, too, is the large number of compounds found in WN prose based on *hírð* as a first component, which are far too numerous to list.

The geographical spread to the West is assured by attestation of *hírð* in both Faroese and Orkney. Jacobsen and Matras (1961: 161) gloss Faroese *hírð* with both Danish *hird* and *hof*, clearly showing the development of the word into the realm of the court in the High Middle Ages. One would expect the word to be most

²I am indebted to Professor L. Moberg for pointing this passage out to me.

frequent in ballads, and such appears to be the case, for Svabo does not cite it in his large dictionary, but in his *Glossar* mentions it in the form *hír*, phonologically to be expected in Faroese.

Orkney displays the legal term *hirdmanstein* (Marwick 1929: 73). According to Marwick, the term referred to one of the old Orkney head courts, though by 1438, apparently the earliest attestation, it is already identical to the Lawting. Orkney *hirdmanstein* is clearly, as Marwick suggests, to be equated with ON *hirðmannastefn*.

East Norse hīrð

At the time of the loan of *hīrð* into Scandinavia, i.e. the early eleventh century, King Knútr the Great was in the process of establishing himself as king of England, and there was much contact between Denmark and England. It would therefore appear highly likely that loans should originate in the Danelaw and enter Nordic via ODa. Indeed, the burden of proof rests on him who challenges this assumption. Nevertheless, it can be shown that the path of the loan word *hīrð* was not from the Danelaw via ODa. to the rest of Scandinavia.

The establishment of Knútr's great retinue, composed of warriors from nearly all of Europe, is described in two late twelfth century texts (not including, despite its literary interest, the discussion of Saxo, which adds little in this context). The short *Vederlov* (ODa. *wíðerlagh*) purports to describe how Knútr established a law for his retinue, with a few details of what the law allegedly contained. Since this text was not recorded until about 1182, by order of Knut VI and Bishop Absalon (Jørgensen 1947: 56 ff.), it is uncertain to what extent it accurately reflects the period of over one

hundred fifty years earlier that it describes.

The text itself is essentially divided into two parts, historical (or pseudo-historical) and legalistic. A historical introduction opens the *Vederlov*, describing how Knútr had felt the need for a just set of laws for his retinue and how he promulgated such laws. Then a legal section follows wherein the laws themselves are presented. These have a contemporary ring to them, and one has the impression that the historical part of the *Vederlov* might have been included in order to justify the binding legal section which followed.

The term *hírð* (ODa. *hirdh*) is attested twice in the *Vederlov*, but only in the introductory historical section. The first occurrence refers strictly to Knútr's retinue or army:

Gambla *knut (MS *knunt*) war konung j danmark oc
ængland oc norghe oc samland oc hawthe hirdh mikla
sankat af al land ther han war kunung iwir.

(*Vederlov* 116, MS E. Don. var. 136, 4⁰).

A few lines later, after the author has established a need for a legal code, he notes:

At konung oc andra hithworthe men ther hirdh skulde
hawa skulde wara sine men holla oc blithe oc rætta
thøm rettelike male therre. (*Ibid.*)

This is followed by a brief statement of the general responsibility of retainers toward their lord, after which the specific legal provisions begin, introduced in one MS (E. don. var. 136, 4⁰) by the familiar *item* and in another (De la Gardi 44, 4⁰) by a paragraph marker.

Reference to the *hírð* gathered together by Knútr seems to answer to the OE passages in the *Chronicle* where Knútr's *hīred* is described; the second attestation of *hirdh* in the *Vederlov* seems to follow the first logically. In short, Knútr is the

only person to whom the text actually ascribes a *hírð*, and the use of the term seems to imply that it was limited to the early eleventh century, during Knútr's reign. The evidence for this is the specific legal section of the text where the term *hírð* is completely lacking. Instead, the collective of retainers is called *lagh* (neut. sing.) 'fellowship, companionship.' This term later became confused with *lagh* (neut. pl.) in *wiþerlagh* 'laws for punishment' so that a compound *wiþerlagh* (neut. sing.) was created, referring to the collective of men. The last step occurred when the compound *wiþerlaghsræt* was formed to refer to the law itself, as in the opening line of the text:

Thettæ ær withirlax ret. ther knut konung. waldemars
søn. oc absolon ærkebiscop lode skriwa. (*Vederlov*
116).

(This, the accepted development, is e.g. described by Hjærne 1929: 83 and Jørgensen 1947: 56 ff.).

It thus appears that *hírð* did not function as a legal, institutional term in later twelfth century Denmark, according to the evidence of the *Vederlov*. The author of the text was apparently familiar with the term, but chose to apply it only in a strictly historical context.

Absence of *hírð* as an institutional term is further demonstrated by the second description of the formation of Knútr's great retinue, the *Lex Castrensis sive Curie* of Sven Aggesøn (printed in *Scriptores* 1.67 ff.), which apparently was composed shortly after the ODa. *Vederlov* (late twelfth century).

Aggesøn writes that after the conquest of England in 1018, Knútr sent home the major portion of his Viking army, after paying them with the last Danegeld. Out of the great army he chose a group of more limited size to form a special retinue. These men were to be the foremost in birth or wealth; only

those were admitted to the smaller group (*promulgavit, solos illos regis clementiam familiaritatis privilegio magis sibi famulariter approximare* (*Scriptores* 1.68)) of 'household servants,' who had the most beautiful and costly weapons. This group was formed, numbering three thousand men, and *suo idiomate Tinglith placuit nuncupari* (*Scriptores* 1.68). Again, there is no mention of the term *hirð*. The group is called *tinglith*, a term that is verified by its use on the Kålsta stone (U668) and later in WN in the form *þingmannalið*—also *þingmenn*—to refer to the same group (for a list of attestations, see Wessén 1960; 24, fn. 10 and 11). The part of the Kålsta inscription that reads *sterkr auk hioruarþr letu reisa þensa stein at faður sin keira sum vestr sat i þikaliði*, which may be transliterated with *Sterker ok Hjorvarþer letu reisa þenna stæin at faður sin Gæira, sum vestr sat i þingaliði*, clearly refers to Knútr's retinue.

Except in the *Vederlov*, *hirð* is unknown in early ODa.: it is not listed in Kalkar, Lundh, or Kristensen, and I know of no attestation. However, the compound *hirdman* is found in *Jydske Lov* and in some Danish runic inscriptions.

In OSw. the situation is the same. The simplex *hirð* is unknown, though the compound *hirð-garðer* is found once in a later section of *Östgötalagen* (DB 5), and *hirðdränger* is also attested. It seems quite unlikely, however, that these terms alone should have been loaned from England, assuming they were ever in use there. More likely, they entered EN as loans from WN (not, as Maurer (1877: 12) suggested for *hirþdränger*, the other way around). These are all terms pertaining to the court, and there can be no question that the Norwegian court during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was the most powerful, richest, and largest in all Scandinavia, a suitable model for the other, smaller Scandinavian courts. One does not ordinarily expect

courtly loans in the EN laws, which were traditionally the property of the common man, although the terminology of the court sometimes was employed in certain sections of the laws where no other terminology was available.

The unique attestations of simplex *hirð* in the *Vederlov*, on the other hand, might conceivably reflect direct retention of OE *hīred* in ODa., particularly as the *Chronicle* assigns Knútr a *hīred*. The lack of the term elsewhere in EN, however, strongly suggests that its use in *Vederlov* may be no more than a historical curiosity; the learned author may have known that Knútr's retinue in England was called a *hīrdh*, but he never used the term in a legal or institutional sense which would be significant to a contemporary audience.

Given the close similarity of all Nordic languages at this period, it seems probable that the WN term *hirð* may have been known in Danish or Swedish courtly circles; if so, it was known as a specifically WN, non-EN term, or as an archaism. The textual evidence cannot be interpreted otherwise.

The loan of the OE term *hīred* into the North via Norway, emphatically not via the Danelaw and Denmark, suggests that North England must have been the source area. Onomastic material reveals that Northumbria, Durham, Yorkshire, Cumberland, Westmoreland and Lancashire were areas of primary Norwegian settlement (see Ekwall 1924: 55 ff., and 1960: xxiv ff.) We recall the strong institutional bond between leader and retainers so characteristic of the term *hīred* in *Christ and Satan*, but not elsewhere in OE; this was an important aspect of the borrowed ON *hirð*. *Christ and Satan* is retained in the venerable West Saxon Junius Manuscript, from about the year 1000, but philological evidence reveals that the poem is of Anglian origin (Frings 1913, Clubb 1925). Norwegian settlement in East Anglia

is assured by such place names as those ending in *-cros(s)* (Mawer 1924: 19), though otherwise the area is predominantly Danish. This further suggests that the borrowing of *hirð* may have been partly a literary phenomenon. This point has already been made in connection with the parallel OE and ON kennings *hīred heofona* and *himla hirð*.

If poetic usage is important in the loan, the medium of the loan may well have been the skalds, many of whom spent time in England. There they must have listened to OE poetry, which at that time was of course comprehensible to them and, in fact, resembled Eddic poetry rather closely. If the skalds were instrumental in the loan, then the otherwise puzzling synonymy of *hirð* and *drótt* becomes readily comprehensible: the skalds simply incorporated *hirð* into their poetry as another poetic variation for *drótt*, the closest native term and institution. We should note that *hirð*, though present by the early eleventh century in WN, is almost completely lacking from the *Poetic Edda*; it is found only in the prose sections and in the late *Hyndluljóð*. The absence is another indication that the loan occurred through the skalds, or at least in courtly circles. Parts of the *Poetic Edda* are contemporary with the skaldic texts presenting the earliest attestations of *hirð*: the *Edda* speaks loudly through its silence.

There remains the problem of how the term *hirð*, apparently initially limited to the skalds, came into general usage. The solution to this problem is twofold.

First, many skalds were themselves members of the *hirð*, and obviously used the word in everyday speech to refer to that institution, particularly as the term *hirð* suited actual conditions far better than the outmoded term *drótt*. Skalds were often widely traveled men, moving from court to court in some

cases, and they would spread the word throughout the WN area. Furthermore, any Viking who had been to England would have heard the word *hīred* used of a large household, in the late eleventh century of the king's court itself, and would therefore understand the ON term *hírð* without difficulty.

Second, the skalds were important sources for the earliest WN prose writing of historical nature, particularly for the *konungasögur* (see Beyschlag 1953, Ellehøj 1965). Their strophes contained the oldest information available to native writers about the old kings, and an integral part of that information was that the kings had a retinue called a *hírð*, which historical writers knew still to be the case. Thus skaldic poetry had a literary as well as a general linguistic influence on the prose writing which is our major source of information on medieval WN.

Certain other loans of a courtly nature must also have occurred by way of the skalds, such as ON *harri* < OE *hearra* (Finnur Jónsson 1921: 74); each case must, however, be investigated individually, since the skalds regularly provide the first attestations of early loanwords. In the case of *hírð*, however, it seems likely that the skalds provided an important link.

Thus, East and West show a different pattern in their replacement of *drótt*. West Scandinavia, with its close ties to England, borrowed a term from OE to denote the new institution, which subsequently had a development in many ways parallel to that in England. In Sweden, the more isolated part of East Scandinavia, with weaker cultural ties to England, such a development never even began, and, instead, by the time texts are recorded on parchment, the king is surrounded by a *hov*; word

and institution were both borrowed from the continent, the immediate source being MLG.

Denmark, on the other hand, occupied something of a middle ground, with its close ties to England via the Danelaw. To be sure, Denmark also borrowed *hov*, but in addition it left behind some evidence of an intermediate stage, Knútr's *þing(a)lið*, the *tinglith* of Sven Aggesøn. The evidence of the Kålsta stone, besides attesting the existence of the word and its usage, also leaves no doubt that the first component is *þing* (neut.), the familiar word for 'meeting' which had its own institutional history in Scandinavia. What it means as the first component of *þing(a)lið* is unknown; Wessén's (1960: 27) tentative suggestion that it might have to do with the *vápnþing* is logical but cannot admit of proof. Safer is his observation (1960: 25) that the formation is parallel to that found in the contemporary *Væringjalið* in Constantinople.

lið

The second component, *lið*, which is also found as simplex throughout Scandinavia, was an institutional term which had to do with the *comitatus*, as a related phenomenon at least. Indeed Trier (1942: 235) suggests at least distant association with the *Mannring*. *Lið* represents the zero-grade of a verbal root whose Gmc. full-grade may be postulated as **līþ-*. It is attested in Goth. *galeiþan*, OE *līþan*, OS *līthan*, OHG *līdan*, and, of course, ON *líða*, all of which share the approximate meaning 'to go.' In Goth. *-leiþan* is the general word for both 'coming' and 'going,' without specification of means; specification is expressed by the verbs *gaggan* 'to go (on foot)' and *faran* 'to travel (some distance, usually by means of some conveyance).' Roughly the same system exists in the other Gmc. languages,

but with somewhat different structure: the importance of **līpan* has been reduced and that of **gangan* increased. Simultaneously, **līpan* has usually acquired different or special senses. This process apparently went farthest in German, where OHG *līdan*, which through the middle of the ninth century was still a general term for motion (Kluge and Mitzka 1967: 433), gradually acquired, almost certainly through contamination from the etymologically unrelated noun *Leid*, the sense which Ger. *leiden* and Dutch *lijden* have today. In OE *līpan* acquired the sense 'to go, travel by sea,' at quite an early period, as, for example, in *Beowulf* 221-223:

þæt ða liðende land gesawon,
brimclifu blican, beorgas steape,
side sænæssas; þa was sund liden . . .

This sense is also attested in the OE adaptation of Bede, as well as in glosses, and is found in *Heliland*, as in line 2233 where the transitive usage parallels that of the above *Beowulf* passage.

It is difficult to penetrate beyond the Gmc. period. Although Feist found Gmc. **līpan* 'ohne sichere Etymologie,' (1939: 8), one may point to Av. (*para-*)*raēth-* 'to die,' a probable euphemism, and Toch. A *lit-* 'to go.' On this rather weak basis, Pokorny (1959: 672) proposes a PIE root **leit(h)* 'to go, die,' adding the o-grade secondary nouns and causative Gmc. verbs, in their ON forms *leið* and *leiða*, as well as Greek *λοῖτη* (Hesych.) 'grave,' perhaps parallel to OHG *leita*, *leitī*, ON *leiði*, with the same meaning; but note OHG *bīleite*, where the notion of the funeral train, the accompanying and bearing of the corpse to the grave, is apparent (Sturtevant 1934: 93 ff.). Recently, however, Markey (1974) has proposed associating the Gmc. terms with the PIE root **lei-* 'to pour'; the primary notion of the verb **līpan* is then regarded as 'to move over water,' and the complex

of funerary drink may then be adduced (Gmc. *līþ-*, ON *líð*, etc.). The general sense of motion found in the verb **līþan* would, thus, be a product of semantic generalization.

Although ON *líða* has the general sense of motion, the specific sense of motion over water is still present, as for example in *skipit leið fram frá flotunum* (*Ósh.* 65), or the more basic *haf . . . líðr lǫnd yfir* (*Hdl.* 42). On a comparative basis, it seems more likely that in the pre-literary period *líða* was used with both the specific sense of motion over water and the general sense.

ON *líð* is most probably a verbal abstract, as in the pairs *blíða: bíð*, *líta: lit*, and so forth. This suggests that *líð* originally referred to a 'going,' a journey or expedition, probably particularly by ship, insofar as the word embodied the action or result of the primary verb *líða*.

Cognate with *líð* are OHG *uzlit* 'way out' and OE *líd* 'ship, vessel,' limited to poetic texts. Similarly, in OE is found the word *líð* 'fleet,' almost certainly a loan from ON. OE *líd* suggests that the verbal abstract **līþa* had acquired a concrete sense, which usage shows it must also have done in ON as well.

The original sense of *líð* is shown most clearly in Swedish runic inscriptions from the Viking period. These texts reveal that the 'going' or expedition of the *líð* was that of a group of warriors who journeyed away from the homeland, often, perhaps mostly, over very great distances. Although the etymology does not suggest whether such missions were for the purposes of trade or war, the inscriptions speak clearly on this point. Most of them are found on stones raised to commemorate a warrior who died in a distant land to the East or South, on the well-known *österled*. These stones usually tell in whose *líð* the warrior fell and specify the location, as in the following ex-

amples, a handful among many:

biurn : auk : stnfriþ : litu : arisas—n : afti :

kisila : han : uti : fial : i lipi : frekis.

Transl. Biorn ok Stæinfrið letu ræisa s[tæi]n æftir
Gisla. Hann uti fioll i liði Frøygæirs (?).

(U611 Tibble (Granhammar), V. Ryds sn.).

In this eleventh century Upplandic inscription the operation of the *lið* abroad is specified by the use of the word *uti*. That the expedition was of a warlike nature is specified by the word *fioll*; the use of *falla* for death generally indicates battle. The expedition was under the direction of a single leader, whose name appears in a genitival relationship with *lið*:

+ suertikr : nuk + kari : auk : kuþmuntr : auk :

skari : auk : knutr : raistu : stæin : þena : aftir :

utruk : faþur : sin : is : fel : i : lipi : kuþuis.

Transl. Svartingr ok Kari ok Guðmundr ok Skari ok
Knutr ræistu stæin þenna æftir Otrygg, faður sinn,
es fell i liði Guðvis. (Sö217 Berga, Sorunda sn.,
Sotholms hd.).

This inscription from Södermanland shows the same usage of *lið* and its dead members as witnessed in U611; the warrior died in battle in an expedition led by a single man.

Such usage is found throughout Sweden in the Viking period. For example, from Västergötland comes the inscription Vgl84, from Smula: . . . *en þeir urðu dauðir i liði austr*, which clearly refers to an expedition along the *österled*.

Of unusual interest is the following poetic portion of a longer inscription, treated in more detail below:

bruþr uaRu þaR bistra mana : a : lanti || auk : i

lipi : uti : hiltu sini huskaþla : ui

han + fial + i + urustu + austr + i + garðum + lis +

furugi + lanmana bestr.

Transl. brøðr vaRu þeir bæstra manna a landi ok i liði uti, h[eld]u sin[a] huskarla ve[1].

hann fioll i orrustu austr i Garðum, liðs forungi, landmanna bæstr. (Sö338 Turinge).

This text is extremely important in illuminating the sense of *lið*. The deliberate contrast between *a landa* and *a liði*, standing as they do in a relationship of complementary antonymy, proves that the *lið* functioned abroad, which is further shown by the use of the word *uti*, as in U611 cited above. This is also the case in, for example, Sö160 (*a Ænglendi i liði*), L1401 (*i liði austr*), and so forth, where hyponymy is involved.

Sö338 also shows the object of the cenotaph to be a victim of war (*hann fioll i orrustu*), himself the leader of the expedition (*liðs forungi*); here again, genitival usage is to be noted, as in U611 and Sö217 cited above. The expression *liðs forungi* is attested on other stones as well, as for example the following:

runa · rista · lit · ranhualtr · huar a × griklandi ·
uas · lis · forunki.

Transl. Runa[R] rista let Ragnvaldr. VaR a Grikklandi, vas li[ð]s forungi. (U112 Side B, Ed, kyrkstigen, Eds sn.).

Although it has been suggested that the *lið* in this inscription is, in fact, the Varangian guard (Jansson 1963: 46), an assumption based on the local specification *a Grikklandi*, this is impossible to prove. There was much Viking activity in the area vaguely known as Grikkland, and without further evidence the Ragnvaldr who himself commissioned this inscription must remain in the shadow of doubt.

It is now clear that a *lið* was an expedition of a warrior band functioning abroad under a single leader. This is shown

perhaps most clearly in the so-called *Ingvarsstenar*, the well-known group of stones commemorating the ill-fated expedition of one Ingvar, an *uppsvensk* Viking, to Serkland, the lands of the Bagdad caliphate. The expedition may be dated to the first half of the eleventh century, around 1020 according to internal evidence, 1041 according to Icelandic sources (for a discussion of the problem of dating this expedition, see Wessén 1960: 35-46). That Ingvar's company was a *líð* is clear from several of the inscriptions:

suan : auk stain : raistu : stain : at · tosta :
 faður : sin : is uarþ : taupr : i lípi : ikuars : auk
 at · þorstain : auk at : aystain : alhiltaris—

Transl. Svæinn ok Stæinn ræistu stæin at Tosta, faður sinn, es var dauður i líði Ingvars, ok at Þorstæin ok at Øystæin, AlfildaR sun. (Sö254, Vansta, Ösmo sn., Sotholms hd.).

This inscription uses the same formulas for Ingvar's expedition as we have noted, i.e. death of the warriors, genitival relationship of the leader of the *líð*, and so forth. There are many other stones of this kind referring to Ingvar's company, spread through Södermanland, Uppland, Västmanland, and Östergötland (listed in Wessén 1960: 30), all of which reveal that Ingvar's expedition consisted of a group of warriors, under a single leader, who journeyed abroad for the purpose of gathering riches, with battle as their most important means of acquiring those riches. It must have been a large expedition, composed of a great many ships, as the following inscription shows:

Þialfi × auk × hulmnlauk × litu × raisa × staina ×
 þisa × ala × at baka × sun sin × is ati × ain × sir ×
 skib × auk × austr × stu[rpi ×] i × ikuars × lið. . .

Transl. Þialfi ok Holmlaug letu ræisa stæina þessa

alla at Banka (Bagga), sun sinn. Es atti æinn seR skip
ok austr styrði i Ingvars lið. (U778 Svinnegarn kyrka).

The romantic *Ingvars saga víðfgrla* puts the number of ships at thirty, which suggests at least that in Icelandic tradition Ingvar's expedition was known to be a large affair. The extraordinary number of stones commemorating this expedition (Wessén lists 25) assures its size, indicated further by Lindqvist's suggestion (1968: 92) that each of the stones was erected in memory of a single ship-chieftain.

Coupled with the formations þing(a)lið and Væringjalið, both of which refer to large groups of warriors, mostly Scandinavians, functioning outside of the homeland, this gives more evidence about the lið. By the eleventh century, it must have been at least capable of referring to a large army, often sea-going, or even to a fleet, even if such was not always the case. This accounts for ME *lið* 'fleet,' a loan from ON.

The same state of affairs may be viewed in roughly contemporary texts from WN. Here *lið* is used to refer to any large warrior band or army; the idea of motion has, however, left but few traces, as in the following passages from *HHund. I*:

Frá goðborinn Guðmundr at því:

'Hverr er landreki, sá er liði stýrir,
oc hann feicnalið færir at landi?' (*HHund. I* 32).

Snúaz hér at sandi snæfgir kiólar,
racca hirtir oc rár langar,
scildar margir, scafnar árar,

göfuct lið gylfa, glaðir Ylfingar (*HHund. I* 49).

Otherwise in the earliest texts *lið* has undergone semantic generalization and is used to refer to any warrior band or army; in most cases, the size of the group seems to parallel the sit-

uation in EN:

Vissak fjandr at fundi
—fekk innan lið minna—
ár, þótt eigi værak
andaðr, at mér standa.

I thought my enemies attacked me quickly at the battle,
though I be not dead; I got less troops (*lið*) from
within. (GSúrs. 2a).

. . . áð biðrausn at ræsis
reið herr ofan skeiðum—
enn í gøgn at gunni
gekk hilmis lið rekkum.

When the army rode down to the prow, to the king's
ship, but the forces (*lið*) of the chieftain went in
battle against the warriors. (Sigv. *Víkingarvísur* 5b).

The passage from Sighvatr clearly uses *lið* and *herr* hyponymously,
and shows through the use of the genitive *hilmis* the relative
bond between the leader and the troops who follow him.

Such specification of a leader for the *lið* is common not
only in EN, but also in early skaldic texts:

Lét lýs gøtu
lið suðr ór Nið
Áleifr, jøfurr
ársæll, fara.

Áleifr, the popular chieftain, caused the troops (*lið*)
to travel the road of the fish out of the river Nið
to the South. (Sigv., *Knútsdrápa* 3b).

Note that in this strophe *lið* is again equated with *herr*, found
in the first helming, and Áleifr is specified as the leader of
the warriors.

The above texts, a random sampling from many, show that WN

lið in the earlier texts corresponds to EN *lið*; generalization has perhaps been carried somewhat further in WN, where *lið* can denote any army.

Interestingly, *lið* was used in the OIc. translation of Gregory's *Dialogues* to render Latin *comitatus*, as in the following:

leitapi hann ser til þess hus gistingar es sva micit
veri at lið hans metti hafa rum inni. (*Leifar fornra
kristinna fræða íslenzkra*, 89).

The OIc. *lið hans* renders *comitatum illius*. In this case I believe the translator may have been moved by the etymological relationship between *lið* and *comitatus*. Or does the sense of *lið* used by the Icelandic translator answer to that attested on the Viking Age runestones in Sweden? That would represent something of an anomaly, since in most WN prose texts generalization has occurred.

EN also witnessed generalization, though rarely. Two passages call for discussion. The first occurs in an interesting eleventh century inscription, the ending of which is as follows:

. . . en . . . + bali + frespen + liþ + lifsþen
. . . *Transl.* en [þæir] Balli, Frøysteinn, lið
Lifstæin[s ristu]. (U1161, Altuna kyrka).

The interpretation that *lið* in this case refers to Lifstæinn's assistants or apprentices was put forth as early as 1907 by von Friesen and is also mentioned by Erik Brate (1925: 51). If the interpretation is correct, this use of *lið* might be considered the only occurrence of the sense 'aid, help,' which became common in WN but is not found in EN. Another possibility is that a craftsman's assistants or apprentices made up a palpable group which could be described by using an extension of the word *lið*. Neither alternative is particularly attractive, especially in view of the incomplete nature of the inscription. The first is to be preferred to the second, however, until another solution appears.

Much later, in a provincial law, the following passage is recorded: *meth lagha lithi scal han til ritha* (SmL. Kyrkbalck). Here the sense 'aid, help,' is used; coupled with the above runic evidence, this suggests that such a sense was indeed present in OSw., if weakly.

Further semantic generalizations of *lið* occurred widely in WN. Sometimes, following the pattern of other words, like **druht*, in this lexical system, *lið* was used to denote any group of men. Thus *lið* is frequent as a base word in kennings, as *lið allra manna* (Sigv., *Óláfsdrápa*), *hglða lið* (Has. 18). *fyrðaða lið* (Háv. 159), all of which mean more or less 'men.'

A very general sense of *lið* in prose is 'aid, assistance.' It is most frequent in the phrase *veita lið*. This may well have meant originally 'to offer concrete aid in the form of physical support, literally to offer a band of troops.' It is not difficult to imagine the progress of this metaphor until, with the deletion of the verb, *lið* in thirteenth century prose came to mean 'help, assistance.'

Of considerable interest is the phrase *lið ok leiðangr* (EN *ledunger*), which must be rather old; besides being alliterative, it is attested throughout the older Scandinavian dialects. *Leiðangr/ledunger* of course refers to the levy, but has special reference to a royal levy of ships and men for the purposes of war. In OSw., three of the old provincial laws (*Upplandslagen*, *Smålandslagen*, and *Västmannalagen*) attest the expression *konunger biuþer liþ ok leþung ut*, for example. In many cases, it is evident that the product of a *leiðangr* is a *lið*, referring specifically to a naval force: *Óláfr konungr fór með liði sínu ok hafði leiðangr úti fyrir landi* (Ósh. 240).

Similarly, one might note that the ancient division of Svealand into *hundaren*, often rather strangely shaped in order to

allow access to a harbor, indicates that the *ledunger*, upon which the division was built, was a naval operation, again suggesting that *lið* had to do with the sea (Wessén 1968: 11). Later, of course, the *leiðangr* became a kind of fixed war contribution, a primitive tax on a perpetual basis that kept the king's coffers tolerably well filled in war or peace. (See e.g. Bolin 1934, which also treats the older situation in ODa.; also Andræ 1960 and Hjärne 1929).

The association between *lið* and *leiðanger/ledunger* shows retention of the original sense of *lið*, namely, a band of warriors under the leadership of a single chieftain, who undertakes an extensive expedition abroad. This sense was strongly retained in the Viking Age in Sweden, though more weakly elsewhere. The earliest *lið* was therefore a kind of *comitatus*, but one which was called into being for the purpose of mobility, usually long travel over water. In this light, note that the inscription on the Glavendrup stone may contain the word *lið* with the sense '*comitatus*.' The part of the inscription in question runs as follows: *auft ala saulua kupa uia l(i)ps haiþuiarþan þiakn*, which has generally been transliterated into ODa. as: *æft Alla solwa, goþa wea, liþs heiþwiarþan þægn*. Recently, however, H. Andersen (1949) has cast doubt on this interpretation and suggested an alternative reading with the proper name *Wælið*. The reading must now be regarded as uncertain. At any rate, there is little evidence that the original *lið* ever functioned at home. Semantic generalization, however, transferred the term to a more general 'army'; the association with the *leiðanger/ledunger* may represent the first step of this development. Further generalization followed in WN. There the term could denote just 'men'; this is parallel to the weakening of **druht-* in NWGmc. Finally WN *lið* came to denote 'aid, help.'

This sense may also have been present in OSw. As a concluding note, one may point out that in WN sagas, *lið* is occasionally used, metaphorically, to denote the royal *hirð*, as in *Heimskringla*, *passim*.

Lið, therefore, referred more properly to a large group, an expedition, than to any sort of *comitatus*. For the band which Knútr the Great organized about him, three thousand strong, such a word was entirely suitable. But for smaller bands, for the new Nordic *comitatus*, *hirð* was the ordinary term.

verðung

Another alternative existed in poetry, however. *Verðung* is attested as early as the tenth century, in the *Gráfeldardrápa* of Glúmr Geirason:

víðlendr of bað vinda
verðung Haraldr sverðum
—frægt þótti þat flotnum
fylkis orð—at morði.

Haraldr, who rules much territory, ordered the warriors (*verðung*) to draw their swords for killing—the ruler's words seemed famous to the sailors. (*Gráf.* 7b).

Here again, as with the skaldic synonyms *drótt* and *hirð*, the *verðung* functions as a band of warriors under the command of a single leader. The loyalty of the *verðung* is stressed in the following strophe of Sighvatr Þórðarson:

Fell í her með hollum
hann verðungar mǫnnum:
leyfðr's at hilmis hǫfði
hróðrauðigs sá dauði.

He fell in battle among the loyal men of the retinue

(*verðung*): the dead one is praised at the head of the praise-rich king. (Sigv., *Erfidrápa Óláfs helga* 18b).

Another important passage from Sighvatr's poetry shows *verðung* in a context *drótt* sometimes occupies: the traditional opening formula, where the poet asks for quiet from the assembled warriors and skalds who make up the *drótt*, as in *hlýði mér drótt*. In this particular strophe of Sighvatr, the formula assumes a more complicated structure, though the sentiment is the same:

Hugstóra biðk heyra
hressfærs jöfurs, þessar
—þolðak vás—hvé vísur,
verðung, of fqr gerðak.

I asked the brave men (*verðung*) of the king to hear how I make strophes about the journey I made—I endured the hardships. (Sigv., *Austrfararvísur* 1a).

Later attestations from Eddic poetry show the same usage, particularly *HHund. I* 9, which includes the traditional motif of rewarding one's men with gold: *hann galt oc gaf/gull verðungo* . . . Perhaps formulaically related is *Hdl. 2*, *hann geldr oc gefr/gull verðugom*, in which the last word is often emended to *verðungo*. *Verðung* is also found in *Sigurðarkviða in skamma* 42, where Gunnarr is called *gramr verðungar*, and in *Helreið* 11.

There can be little doubt that the term *verðung* is functionally synonymous with *drótt* and *hírð* in skaldic poetry. More examples could be offered to illustrate the synonymy. The word is fairly old and not attested anywhere outside of WN poetry with this sense.

Verðung, a fem. in *-ungō-*, apparently represents an original

abstract which later became a collective, a development parallel to that of the terms *drótt* and *líð*. It is most likely that *verðung* is a denominative based on the word *verð* (neut.) 'price, wage,' and reflects the payment of one sort or another which the member of the *comitatus* received, or perhaps even the benefits. The early dates of the first attestations (e.g. *Gráf.* 7b, *Hfr.*, *Óláfs Erfidrápa* 14b, etc.) disprove any notion that the word may be a loan or loan formation from OE (as, for example, Kuhn 1956: 44). It is highly probable, however, that, particularly with the increasing frequency and intensity of Viking activity in England, ON *verðung* and its cognate OE *weorðung*, based on OE *weorð*, may have undergone mutual influence. OE *weorðung* means 'honoring, distinction, honor, glory;' the possibility of Nordic influence is suggested by attestation of the word with this meaning in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. In religious texts, *weorðung* means 'celebration, worship,' and has given rise to certain compounds, such as *weorðungdæg* 'church festival' and *weorðungstow* 'place of worship.'

The semantic development of the two cognates may help us to illuminate the use of the ON term *verðung* within the realm of the *comitatus*. The sense of OE *weorðung* 'honor, glory' suggests these attributes as some of the benefits of the *comitatus* relationship, benefits which accrue to both the leader and his retainers. Thus, the collective *verðung* as the product of an abstract **werþungō-* may be seen as an embodiment of certain principle attributes of the entire relationship, i.e. of the honor and glory which formed part of the basis of the definition of this Gmc. social institution as early as in the Latin definition provided by Tacitus.

Chapter 4.

Individual and Comitatus

draugr

The older NGmc. dialects attest a large variety of terms for 'man, warrior.' Among these are *draugr*, *seggr*, *rekkr*, *þegn*, *hǫlðr*, and *halr*. Scholarship has not yet produced a complete study of the semantics of this complex lexical system, though various aspects of it have been treated individually. Here we will treat only one aspect, namely, the relationship between words in this lexical system and the institution of the *comitatus* as it has been described in the preceding two chapters.

The first problem is to determine what the member of the Gmc. **druhtiz* was called. It has been shown that **druhtiz* was a *-ti-* abstract from the Gmc. verb **driugan*, reflected in WGmc. by OE *dreogan* 'to do, perform, experience, etc.' and in EGmc. by Goth. *driugan* 'to do military service, make war.' NGmc. lacks the strong verb and, instead, attests a weak verb *drýggja* 'to do, perpetrate.' There can, however, be little doubt that NGmc. did at one time have the strong verb **drjúga*. This is suggested not only by the comparative evidence, but also by the apparently deverbative formation of *drýggja* and the existence of the *-ti-* abstract *drótt*.

It therefore appears most likely that a word would be derived from the same root to denote the member of the *comitatus*. More precisely, one might expect a *nomen agentis* derived from this

verbal root to describe the member of the *comitatus* in his role as the man who carries out the action implied by *dreug-. An -o-grade -a- stem masc *nomen agentis* would have the form *draugaz in Gmc. While there is no evidence for the existence of such a word in EGmc. or WGmc., in NGmc. it seems to have left definite traces.

The man responsible for the discovery of the *nomen agentis* was G. Neckel. In an incisive paper (1914) he demonstrated that the skaldic term *draugr*, limited exclusively to warrior kennings and previously interpreted as 'tree,' was in its earliest attestations a *nomen agentis* based on a lost *drjúga < *driugan. Neckel ascribed the replacement of *drjúga by *drýggja* to homonymy with the preterite of *draga*; the preterite of *drjúga was, therefore, reformed from strong *dró(h) to a weak *drýggði*, which led to formation of a new infinitive and loss of the original in all forms. If this explanation is correct, the replacement must have occurred fairly late, but it is still plausible. As Neckel shows, the earlier usage of *drýggja* answers closely to that which must be postulated for *drjúga, recovered partly on the basis of comparison with OE *dreogan*. WN *drýggja* means 'to do, commit, perpetrate,' which is parallel to the sense of OE *dreogan*. *Drýggja*, always used transitively, attests a positive sense in the alliterative phrase *drýggja dáð*; such usage must be quite old (see Chapter 1). Mostly, however, the word has a negative sense: *drýggja* (like *dreogan*) is used of sins and misdeeds, and both the OE and ON verbs can be extended to mean 'to suffer.' Neckel showed convincingly that such usage is late and can even be based on earlier, similar usage with positive connotation. His most cogent piece of evidence for this thesis is the exultant cry of Sigefer in the OE *Battle of Finnsburg*, one of the oldest pieces of Gmc. heroic poetry: *fæla ic*

weana gebað,/*heardra hilda* (*Finnsburh* 25-26). Here the line 'I endured much woe' actually means 'I performed valiantly in battle;' note particularly the parallelism between *weana* and *heardra hilda*. Such outwardly negative phraseology, with a strong positive sense, may have been characteristic of the oldest Gmc. heroic poetry, and would, therefore, have affected the use of **driugan* and its descendent *drygja*.

From Gmc. **driugan* or NGmc. **drjúga* a *nomen agentis draugr* was formed. Such a formation is morphologically predictable, providing the semantics can be explained. Given the paucity of attestations of *draugr* in the skaldic corpus, the explanation is not without difficulty. Still, *draugr* as *nomen agentis* is more satisfactory than *draugr* 'tree.'

The earliest attestation of the term occurs in Bragi's *Ragnarsdrápa*, presumably one of the oldest extant pieces of skaldic poetry:

Þás hristi-Sif hringa
hals en bǫls of fyllða
bar til byrjar drǫsla
baug ǫrlygis draugi.

When the woman, filled with evil, brought a ring to
the man at the ship (*Rdr.* 8)

The term *draugr* appears here in an obvious man or warrior kenning, *ǫrlygis draugr* 'the *draugr* of battle.' It is apparent why many commentators have abstracted the meaning 'tree' for *draugr* out of such a kenning; 'tree of battle' is a perfectly obvious warrior kenning, 'warrior of battle' is tautological. However, the problem may not be as great as it first appears. Although inelegant, tautological kennings and poetic compounds are elsewhere attested in Gmc. poetry. As Meissner points out (1921: 246), the skaldic examples of tautology in kenning forma-

tion may have been a feature of Gmc. poetic diction and so ought to have affected the very earliest skaldic poetry. In OE, from the same semantic field, are *beadu-rinc*, *hilde-freca*, *guð-rinc*, *heaðo-rinc*, *hilde-rinc*, *guð-freca*, and so forth; these terms, typical of e.g. *Beowulf*, the oldest layer of Gmc. poetry in OE, all exhibit tautological structure and mean roughly 'battle-warrior.' This is the same tautology found in kenning form in *Rdr.* 8. ON poetry, too, has tautological compounds, though Finnur Jónsson has done his best to eliminate the skaldic examples through vigorous emendation. From the military sphere come *her-drengr* 'warrior,' *her-drótt* 'army,' and *gunn-spjót* 'spear,' and perhaps also the personal name *Hildigunn*, a legendary figure mentioned in *Hdl.* 17. Thus, there are Gmc. precedents for tautology.

Nevertheless, the kenning *ørlygis draugr* need not even be tautological. If *draugr* was still understood as a strong *nomen agentis*, perhaps with the sense 'perpetrator,' the kenning ceases to be tautological and, indeed, follows an age-old structural principle in kenning formation, namely, the use of a *nomen agentis* as base word (see Meissner 1921: 254). If that is the case, *ørlygis draugr* may be interpreted as 'perpetrator of battle,' a satisfactory warrior kenning.

This leads to a third possibility. As mentioned by Neckel (1914: 191), *drýggja* is used in ON poetry in the expression *drýggja ørlög* 'to execute fate,' found in *Vkv.* 1 and 3; note that this phrase employs the neuter plural *ørlög* 'fate' and not the neuter singular *ørlygi* 'battle' found in the kenning under discussion. The expression *drýggja ørlög* is parallel to OE *orleg dreogan* (*Judgment Day* I 29) and *orlegstund dreogan* (*Solomon and Saturn* 375-376). Early Norse poetic language would probably therefore have possessed a like expression, which may be recon-

structed as **drjúga ørlgg*. It might well be this expression which underlies the kenning *ørlygis draugr* found in *Rdr.* 8. A kenning *ørлага draugr* referring to the warrior as an agent of fate would be easily comprehensible in light of the verbal expressions found in OE and ON, and would not be tautological in the least. But a later generation of scribes, who had no understanding of the older expression and who indeed might themselves have believed that *draugr* meant 'tree,' would be capable of changing an incomprehensible *ørлага* to *ørlygis*, simply because they knew they were dealing with a warrior kenning. There is no doubt that the MSS do read *ørlygis* now, but there is also no doubt that the MSS containing *Rdr.* 8 are relatively late (see Finnur Jónsson 1912: A1.2); indeed they postdate *Rdr.* by nearly four centuries. A change from **ørлага* to *ørlygis*, which is relatively minor and has absolutely no effect whatever on the metre or diction, could have occurred at any time during those four centuries.

The above speculation need not be emphasized greatly. However, the sum of the evidence concerning other tautological formation in Gmc. metaphor, the probably strong sense of *draugr* as *nomen agentis*, and the possibility that the phrase **drjúga ørlgg* underlies the kenning, suggest strongly that *draugr* in *Rdr.* 8 is a descendant of the PIE root **dhereugh-*, the source of ON *drótt* and the original Gmc. *comitatus* terminology.

In addition to *Rdr.* 8, Neckel noted four other early stanzas in which *draugr* appears to be used as a *nomen agentis*. Such sense is strongest in Glúmr Geirason's *Lausavísa*, where Neckel circumscribed the compound *berdraugr* with *sverðberendr*. Otherwise, the earlier attestations of *draugr* which suggest derivation from **dhereugh-* are warrior kennings parallel to that found in *Rdr.* 8, viz. '*draugr* of battle.' These are Eyvindr skáldaspillir's

Lv. 5 (*éldraugr ála galtar*: *ála goltr* 'helmet,' its *él* 'hail' is battle), the Karlevi stone (*draugr dolga Þrúðar*: the 'enmities of Þrúðr' are battle), and Grettir *Lv.* 10 (*éldraugar atgeira*: the 'spear-hail' is battle). Of the five attestations showing this sense, one is from the ninth century (*Rdr.* 8), three from the tenth (Glúmr, Eyvindr and Karlevi, of which only Karlevi is fully trustworthy), and one from the eleventh (Grettir, also perhaps untrustworthy). Thus at least *Rdr.* and Karlevi assure the age of this usage. With regard to the apparent tautology of these warrior kennings, the first two arguments concerning *ørlygis draugr* apply, though not, of course, the third. But once a warrior kenning '*draugr* of battle' had been formulated, the nature of the tradition was such that the same kenning could be used by others without any real understanding of what the individual components meant. In skaldic poetry, and indeed any Gmc. poetry, it is the systems which matter. Once *draugr* was accepted into a system 'X of battle,' the meaning of the term as simplex was no longer important.

Neckel's suggestion has not gained universal acceptance. Although Meissner (1921: 264) announced in its favor, Finnur Jónsson (1931: 84) dismissed it as *næppe rigtig*, and, as far as I know, Ernst Albin Kock never mentioned it in his vast writings on skaldic poetry. Among the etymologists, Pokorny rejects it, Kluge-Mitzka accept it (s.v. *trocken*), and de Vries mentions it without taking a stand. Those who reject Neckel's supposition embrace the old notion, which in modern times goes back at least to Sveinbjörn Egilsson's edition of *Lexicon Poeticum* (1860; see Finnur Jónsson 1931), that *draugr* means 'tree.' This is a pure abstraction from the kennings in which *draugr* is involved. Besides those having the form '*draugr* of battle,' the term is involved in one other kenning

system, *viz.* 'draugr of the weapon.' It is, indeed, true that a meaning 'tree' would fit in such kennings. But that is not proof. In fact, the one piece of 'proof' stemming from the middle ages is a product of the same kind of abstraction which has misled modern scholars. Although *draugr* is not listed as a tree word anywhere in the *pulur*—a significant absence—it does occur within a list of tree words in a discussion of man kennings found only in the Codex Wormianus redaction of the *Skaldskaparmál* of *Snorra Edda* (see Finnur Jónsson 1924: 105; the attestation is also quoted in Neckel 1914: 189). The absence of the word from the other major MSS of *Snorra Edda*, however, brands this attestation as a late supposition on the part of a learned scribe or some other who knew the contemporary skaldic tradition but whose knowledge can hardly have extended far back in time. Since Codex Wormianus was not recorded until around the middle of the fourteenth century (Finnur Jónsson 1924: ii; SE: x), such late additions are not entirely unexpected.

The etymological burden of proof also lies heavy on the shoulders of the supporters of the *draugr* 'tree' theory. The etymology usually advanced for this word traces it to a PIE root **dhreugh-* 'shake, shiver, shrink' (Pokorny 1959: 255, 275), the presumed source of a Gmc. **driug-* 'dry;' this root is unattested outside WGmc., within which there is a certain variety among the forms attested. A *-u-* stem adj. with the nominal *-n-* suffix (Ger. *trocken* < **druknu-* with *Verschärfung* of *g* > *k/-n*) alternates with the *-ja-* stems **drugī* and **draugi* (Eng. *dry*, OE *dryge*, versus e.g. Du. *droog*—for a discussion, with literature, see Kluge-Mitzka 1967: 791). This exclusively WGmc. evidence shows no opening where an *-a-* stem **draugaz* would fit in. Furthermore, even if one accepts that *draugr* can indeed be

traced back to a root meaning 'dry,' one is still left with the problem of explaining the semantic development from 'dry' to 'tree.' Adherents of this theory postulate a middle stage 'dry tree,' which is completely without parallels, either in Gmc. or outside it, and, furthermore, nonsensical as the base word of a warrior kenning. In fact, this etymology must be regarded as a purely *ad hoc* attempt to reconcile a scholarly abstraction and a late and untrustworthy piece of medieval speculation. It is a construct, with no basis in reality.

Draugr < **dhereugh-* has a firm base in the reality of the Gmc. *comitatus*. It displays exact cognates in Lith. *draũgas* '(traveling) companion' and Latvian *draugs* 'friend,' and OCS *drugŭ* 'friend,' (for other cognates, see pp. 18-19); the close relationship between Balto-Slavic and Gmc. further strengthens the argument.

The testimony of Codex Wormianus does suggest unequivocally that medieval Scandinavians were capable of regarding *draugr* as 'tree.' It has already been suggested that this is the product of the same kind of abstraction that modern scholars have carried out, but this does not alter the fact that, particularly in the kennings '*draugr* of weapons,' a meaning 'tree' would fit nicely. Neckel accepts this meaning as a later development and is essentially willing to read all kennings of this structure as attestations of this meaning of *draugr*. He explains the development of such usage to be clearly secondary (1914: 196). With the loss of the strong verb **drjúga*, the intense martial sense of the *nomen agentis draugr* was lost as well, since the noun became isolated from the verb. Skalds knew only that it belonged in warrior kennings, but they no longer knew how. It was therefore a short step to employ the genitive of words or expressions for 'weapon' instead of for 'battle' in such

kennings. Specifically, Neckel suggests that this might have occurred in conjunction with the compound *éldraugr*, which usage shows to be very old. Certain other compounds in *él-* were sometimes used without this first component. If a kenning '*eldraugr* of the weapon, i.e. *draugr* of the weapon hail (battle)' were shortened to '*draugr* of the weapon' through deletion of the first component of *éldraugr*, the skalds, who no longer understood *draugr* as a *nomen agentis*, would mechanically introduce the word into other kenning systems with this form; the most frequent of such systems is 'tree of the weapon,' which also is conveniently similar to the system based on 'tree of battle.' Something like this must, indeed, have happened, but the actual role of *él-draugr*, though unusually interesting, is *nimum probare*, and it is also important to bear in mind that a great deal of skaldic poetry may never have found its way onto vellum.

Whatever the explanation of the introduction of the secondary meaning of *draugr*, the term appears to have entered the kenning system 'X of weapons' at a fairly early date. The first attestation is found in *Hrómundr halti* 2, probably from the mid-tenth century. *Hrómundr* employs the kenning *draugr flatvallar bauga*, where *flatvallar baugr* is taken to be a shield kenning. Other tenth century attestations of this kenning system with *draugr* as base word occur in *Vellekla* 30 (*draugr Heðins váða* '*draugr* of the clothing of Heðin (armor)'), and *Þórarinn Máhliðingr* 7 (*baugs óðaldraugr* '*draugr* of the ring of land (shield)'—see Neckel 1914: 195). *Háv.* 9 (*herðidraugr* '*draugr* of the sword') and 14 (*ægis jóðraugar* '*draugar* of the sea-steed, ship') stem from the early eleventh century. The kenning in *Háv.* 14, by the way, is not strictly part of a system 'X of the weapon;' what the skald intended *draugr* to mean in this strophe is an open question. After these early eleventh century attestations, the word is

used sparingly in the skaldic corpus, with the last attestations coming in the thirteenth century (Svarf. 13 and Bergb. 3). Finnur Jónsson's list of the attestations of *draugr* (1931: 84) is, as far as I know, complete, and it shows no usage not discussed there.

ON *draugr* is retained only in kennings in skaldic poetry, indeed, only in certain kinds of kennings, namely, man or warrior kennings. The theoretical implications of the usage are important; they suggest that the word was very old and had fallen out of use everywhere in the language except in this most archaic literary genre, where it was retained as part of a linguistic structure relevant only to certain situations and environments. *Draugr* is not found as a simplex anywhere in the Gmc. languages, and, but for the conservativeness of skaldic diction, which retained the word even after it was no longer understood, no traces of *draugr* would have remained. WGmc. may well have possessed the word as well but lost it at a pre-textual date.

On the basis of the etymology and the obviously archaic value of the word among the skalds, *draugr* must be regarded as a product of the earliest chronological layer of *comitatus* vocabulary. The **draugaz* was the member of the collective **druhtiz*, a man who carried out the action of the verb **driugan*, in short, a warrior who made up part of an institution created out of martial necessity. This institution, the **druhtiz*, was under the command of the **druhtinaz*. Thus, a complete set of terms based on one root is attested that represent the earliest level of Gmc. reconstruction for this institution. But the lexical systems involved were far from static, and *draugr* clearly fell from use at an early date. So early, in fact, that we can only speculate about the reasons. Nevertheless, a tentative explanation is forthcoming.

ON possesses another word *draugr*, which has the meaning 'ghost, spirit.' Far more widespread, it is found throughout ON literature and is represented in the modern languages with Ic. *draugur*, Norw. dial. *draug*, Far. *dreygur*, and perhaps also Da. *drog* 'good-for-nothing' and Sw. dial. *dröger*, found in Hälsingland and Värmland (Rietz 1867: 'blek, magtløs, senfärdig människa, som skrider fram'). Although the EN forms may also easily be traced to the verb *draga* (see Niels Åge Nielsen 1966: 69 and 70), the various WN forms admit of no doubt. They presuppose a NGmc. **draugaz*, with a different origin from that of *draugr* 'warrior.' *Draugr* 'ghost' is related to the WGmc. ablaut forms OS *gidrōg* 'appearance, deception,' MDu. *ghedroch(t)* 'deception, ghost,' MHG *getroc* 'deception,' and the verbs OS *bidriogan*, OHG *triogan* 'to deceive.' Non-Gmc. cognates, which certify the etymology, are Skt. *drogha-* 'damage,' *drūh-* 'demon,' Av. *draoga-* 'lie,' Mlr. *aurddrach* 'ghost,' and so forth (de Vries 1962: 81). The widespread distribution throughout IE permits confident postulation of a PIE root **dhreugh-* 'deceive, injure' (Pokorny 1959: 276). The two words which have the form *draugr* in ON would have been in complete homonymy from the earliest period of Gmc. Both denoted active, moving beings with human form, in short, two outwardly closely related conceptions. One denoted the warrior who fought in the *drótt*, a man of fairly high social standing, the defender of society. The other, however, had a distinctly negative connotation. Examination of the usage of this other *draugr* shows that it was far more menacing than is conveyed by translation with the modern English word 'ghost.' A *draugr* was a corpse who refused to stay in his grave. The *draugr*, who in his lifetime had often been a man of bad or uncertain character, provided great trouble to the surrounding farmers, often raiding their farms, inflicting physical damage

on the farmers themselves or members of their households, whenever he was out of the grave. The only way to stop a *draugr* was to overcome him in battle, but the greatest heroes alone could accomplish this feat, for the *draugr* usually had super-human strength. In the various saga accounts where a *draugr* appears, however, the *draugr* is invariably laid permanently to rest, and the threat to society is ended. The phenomenon is said to have been noted in various forms until recent times in certain parts of Norway.

I do not wish to suggest that the ON conception of the *draugr* is found in the sagas unchanged from Gmc. times. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the *draugr* was a harmful, threatening phenomenon, whatever the particulars of belief may have been. This is apparent from the etymology: *draugr* comes from a root which at least in PIE times could mean 'injure, damage,' as well as 'deceive.' Since this meaning is found at the earliest stage of reconstruction as well as in the sagas, it is likely that the word had at least a strong negative connotation throughout its history in Gmc.

It seems likely, therefore, that this *draugr*, the threat to the well-being of society, forced the other *draugr*, the member of the **druhtiz*, out of the language. This was not difficult, since the lexical system of words meaning 'warrior' was well stocked with suitable replacements, so a replacement lay close at hand. The replacement must have occurred fairly early, since *draugr* 'warrior' is unattested in WGmc. and a skaldic curiosity in NGmc., found only in one or two kenning systems. If the loss of *draugr* 'warrior' is to antedate the onset of WGmc. texts, it must be dated to before 600 A.D. Such early loss would be consistent with the nearly total absence of the word, even in skaldic poetry, though in NGmc. the loss need not have taken

place before ca. 850.

rekkr

The loss of *draugr* necessitated the introduction or appropriation of another term to denote the member of the *comitatus*. The introduced term seems to have been Gmc. **rinkaz*, which is widely spread through NWGmc. It appears as *rinc* in OE and OS, *rinch* in OHG; in these languages it generally means 'warrior, retainer.' In the North the word is obsolete in prose, but is attested frequently in WN poetry in the form *rekkr*. It is also occasionally found in ONw. laws and such EN placenames as Sw. *Rinkeby* (Hellquist 1918: 76; Lindroth 1918: 59 ff.) and Da. *Rynkeby* (Hald 1933).

The question of the etymology was settled by Holthausen (1913: 337), whose proposal is followed by both de Vries (1962: 441) and Pokorny (1959: 854 ff.). Essentially, *rekkr* is to be traced to a Gmc. root **ranka* 'straight,' a form of PIE **reg-* with nasal infix, which Pokorny glosses with 'gerade, gerade richten, lenken, strecken, aufrichten (auch unterstützend, helfend); Richtung, Linie (Spur, Geleise),' and so forth, the group of Lat. *rēx*, Skt. *rāja*, etc. Cognates within Gmc. are OE *ranc* 'proud,' MLG *rank* 'slim, weak,' and OIc. *rakkr* 'upright, brave.'

In WGmc. *rinc(h)* is used of warriors, often in contexts implying retainership. Usually, however, no bond is specified.

In an important article, Hans Kuhn (1944) has introduced a useful approach to words in this semantic field. Texts often order two men, placing one under the other by using the gen. of the superior or leader; thus a phrase like 'king's men' orders the men and the king. If a term is often used as the object of such gen. expressions to denote the subordinate member, Kuhn

accepts this as evidence that the term in question was a technical term, a *Rangbezeichnung*, for a man who was under the command of or under obligation to another.

Using this approach, Kuhn arrives at statistical results which demonstrate convincingly that *rekkr* was, indeed, used as a technical term in the earliest Nordic poetry. According to Kuhn's calculations (which I have checked and whose accuracy I can attest), *rekkr* is used with a gen. indicating dependency about one of every four times it occurs in skaldic poetry up to the late twelfth century and in the *Poetic Edda*; the precise figures Kuhn cites are fourteen of fifty-six. Examples of comparative figures for similar terms are *þegn* one of twelve (six of seventy-two) and *drengr* one of fourteen (eight of one hundred twelve). *Rekkr* was thus probably a technical term used to denote a man dependent in some way on another. I suggest that, in fact, the *rekkr* was the member of the *comitatus*.

This is apparent from the earliest usage. An early attestation, presumably from the ninth century, if genuine, clearly suggests that such was the case:

Mjök eru mínir rekkar
til mjöðgjarnir fornir
auk hér komnir, hárir.

Hví eruð æfar margir?

My old warriors (*rekkar*), who have now arrived here, greyhaired, are very eager for mead. Why are you so many? (Haraldr hárfagri, *Vísa*).

Here the *rekkar* are dependent on no less than king Haraldr hárfagri himself, who uses the possessive *mínir* about them, indicating a close relationship. The retainers are described with a stock characteristic, familiar to Gmc. poetry; like the retainers of *Beowulf*, for example, or of Nordic heroic poetry,

they are eager for mead. This stock image even led to the formation of such terms as OE *medusele*, ON *mjǫðrann*, 'mead-hall;' the image is age-old in Gmc. poetry. In this stanza of Haraldr hárfagri, it is used consistently with the old usage; the *rekkar* here must be his retainers.

A stanza attributed to the later tenth century exhibits similar usage:

Liðbrøndum kná Lundar
landfrækn jǫfurr granda.
Hykka ræsis rekka
Rína grjótt of þrjóta.

The bold prince of Lund wasted the gold. I know that the king's warriors do not suffer from lack of gold.

(Eskál., *Dikt om Harald blåtand*, 1).

In this case, the king is Harald Bluetooth. His leadership over his *rekkar* is shown by the use of the gen. of *ræsir* 'king.' This strophe, too, presents a stock scene typical of the relationship between king and retainers: the king is rewarding his loyal retainers with gold. It will be recalled that both *drótt* and *hírð* were attested in the same stock scene. The partial hyponymy indicates that the *rekkar* could be conceived of as members of the king's *comitatus*, specifically of the *drótt*, since this stanza, if genuine, precedes the loan of *hírð*.

Such partial hyponymy, i.e. sharing of environments, typifies the relationship between *rekkr* and *drótt*, indicating that *rekkr* could be used to refer to the individual member of the *drótt*. A typical example of such usage is found in the following laudatory stanza of Hallfreðr vandræðaskáld from around the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century:

baða hertryggðar hyggja
hnekkir sína rekka

—þess lifa þjóðar sessa
þröttar orð—á flótta.

The warrior forbade his followers (*rekkar*) to think of flight—the powerful words of the comrade of the people (will) live. (Hfr., *Óláfs erfíðráða* 2b).

Here the familiar *drótt* context involving leader, warriors, and battle, with the addition of the possessive *sína*, is employed for the term *rekkr*. Since the stanza predated the entry of *hirð* into ON, the reference here must be to members of the *drótt*. And just as *hirð* was assimilated into environments typical of *drótt*, *rekkr* continued to be used in such contexts, even long after the *drótt* must have been defunct as an institution. This can only mean that a poetic transfer was made, since there is no reference whatever in contemporary medieval texts to a *rekkr* as a member of the *hirð*. An example of the poetic transfer occurs in the following stanza of Markús Skeggjason, which may be dated to the twelfth century:

Röndu lauk of rekka kindir
risnumaðr, svát hver tók aðra.
Hamalt—knöttu þá hlífar glymja—
hildingr fylkði liði mildi.

The proud prince stationed his men so close together that their shields touched. The warrior arranged his powerful forces in a *svínfylking*—then the shields resounded. (*Eiríksdrápa* 17).

It will also be recalled that *drótt* was sometimes used of enemy armies. Such usage is also attested for *rekkr*, as in the following stanza of Sighvatr Þórðarson:

Þás við rausn at ræsis
reið herr ofan skeiðum,
enn í gögn at gunni

gekk hilmis lið rekkum.

When the army rode proudly down to the king's ship,
but the prince's men went in battle against the
warriors (*rekkum*). (*Víkingarvísur* 5b).

Finally, another environment typical of *drótt* in which *rekkr* is also found is the audience for skaldic poetry. The poet—and indeed, the stanza—are the same:

Drópu lætk ór Dvalins greip
dynja, meðan fram hrynir
—rekkum býðk Regins drykk
réttan—á bragar stétt.

I cause the poem to resound from the hand of the
dwarf [a reference to the mead of poetry], while it
echoes on the path of poetry; I offer the men a true
poem. (Haraldr hárfagri, *Snæfríðardrápa*. cf. Kock
NN 133).

In the first helming of this traditional stanza the king implores his audience to silence with the words *hlýði mér drótt*. This is clearly parallel to *rekkum býðk Regins drykk réttan* in the second helming. Here formal equivalence between *drótt* and *rekkr* provides an additional indication that at an early date in Scandinavia a *rekkr* could be a member of the Nordic *comitatus* or *drótt*.

Finnur Jónsson (1931: 463-464) postulates a general meaning of *rekkr*, viz. 'mand i alm.', which according to him is attested quite early. One of the stanzas he cites which allegedly shows this meaning is Sighvatr's *Víkingarvísur* 5, which I have mentioned. It is clear that Sighvatr uses *rekkr* with the sense 'retainer,' both in this stanza and in others where he uses the term. An even earlier passage, however, which allegedly attests this general sense is the following, from the tenth century, if it

is genuine:

Hverr's und bjarnar barði

á bekk kominn rekka

(ulf hafa órir niðjar)

ægiligr (und bægi)?

Who, frightening under the bear's beard (shaggy?) has come to the bench of men (*rekka*)? Our kinsmen are sheltering a wolf in sheep's clothing. (Holmgöngu-Bersi 3a).

The problem here is to determine to which word, *hverr* or *bekk*, the gen. pl. *rekka* is to be attributed. Finnur Jónsson (1912: B1.78) followed the first option, translating *hverr rekka* with 'hvilken mand.' The second option was suggested by Ernst Albin Kock (NN 2232), who pointed out such parallels as *konungs háseti*, *sveina pallr* and many more. Formally there is little to choose between the two alternatives, which leads Einar Ól. Sveinsson to note in his edition of *Kormaks saga* 'rekka getur átt við hvort sem vill *hverr* eða *bekk*' (247). Nevertheless, there are good reasons for preferring Kock's analysis, the main one being the simplicity of the syntax. Furthermore, the use of interrogative pronoun plus partitive gen., though generally possible in WN prose (see Nygaard 1966: art. 130), is apparently not found within skaldic diction for the interrogative *hverr*, but only for the indefinite pronoun (Finnur Jónsson 1931: 301). Of perhaps greatest importance is the usage of the examples cited by Kock: *sveina pallr*, *segga búðir*, *jgfra sess*, and *konungs háseti*, to which might be added *segga sessi* (Tindr Hallkelsson, *Hákonar-drápa* 3), and perhaps *brúðarbekkr*, a compound attested in prose having to do with the special arrangement of the benches at a wedding. The principle for formation of all these expressions is the addition of the gen. of a noun denoting a person of a

certain institutionalized social status to the term for 'bench, seat.' This must be in large part the result of institutionalized seating arrangements in the old halls, where a man's place was indicated by his seat, and all of the men of the same rank sat together. A *rekka bekk* would fit nicely into this system. All indications therefore are that this stanza of HolmB. does not attest a general meaning of *rekkr*, but rather a technical one. The sum of the evidence, then, indicates that *rekkr* was employed either completely technically, or at least to denote 'warrior,' in its earliest attestations. Any general meaning the word possesses represents a secondary development.

The institutional sense of *rekkr* is also reflected in certain kennings. One example is the rather early kenning found in the poem *Ynglingatal* of Þjóðólfr ór Hvíni, *rekks lögðuðr*, a king kenning which may be roughly translated with 'the inviter of the man or warrior (*rekkr*).' Finnur Jónsson (1931: 338) surely has correctly clarified the meaning of the kenning with 'heltes indbyder, fyrste som indbyder helte (til ophold hos sig).' Whether the king is offering his hospitality or merely gifts, the effect is the same: the kenning is built on the specific, institutional relationship characteristic of the *comitatus*. In this case, specific reference is made to the provisions the leader makes for his followers. The kenning depends on an institutional sense of *rekkr*.

More generally, however, the use of *rekkr* in kennings would be expected to be somewhat less institutional. Such is the case in the following strophe, which has been the object of various attempts at clarification:

Torugætir 'ro-teitan
tók hrafn á ná jafnan;
ek em við ógnar rekka

ðhryggr—vinir tryggvir.

Infrequent are faithful friends—the raven often enjoys the corpse; I am unafraid in battle (*við ógnar rekka*). (HolmB. 7b).

Finnur Jónsson (1912: B1.87) emends MS *ognar* to *ógnir*, once again attempting to avoid a tautological kenning, in this case, *ógnar rekkar* 'warriors of battle,' (against which see Kock NN 1984). His *ógnir rekka* 'folks trusler' is partially accepted by Einar Ól. Sveinsson, who prints *ógnar* in his *Kormaks saga* edition but notes that *ógnar* 'virðist flt. af ógn og á þá að vera ógnir; ógnar rekkar væri leiðinlegur skáldskapur.' (1939: 252). Nevertheless, Kock has pointed out parallel tautological expressions, *viz. oddregns þegnar* (Háv. 13) and *hjaldrs hǫlðar* (Þórm. 1.15), and note the tautological compounds, such as OE *beadurinc*. It therefore seems likely that *rekkr* in HolmB. 7 refers to 'warrior,' not a general 'man.' The usage is not, however, institutional.

The earlier skaldic usage reveals, then, that *rekkr* was often used of retainers, occupying similar environments to those presented by *drótt*; like *drótt*, too, *rekkr* had a more general side. In the earlier skaldic corpus, this general side was made up by the meaning 'warrior;' *rekkr* never went as far as *drótt* did, to become simply 'man (men) in general'—at least not in skaldic poetry. The meaning 'warrior' is fully consonant with the usage in WGmc. of *rinc(h)*. It should also be noted, however, that the meaning 'warrior' is limited in skaldic poetry for the most part to kennings. This is parallel to *drótt*, which was used much more generally in kennings than as an ordinary simplex. Again, much of this was necessitated by the demands of the poetic diction and penchant for circumlocution, particularly parallelism.

Skaldic poetry was probably almost exclusively the product of an upper class composed of warriors and retainers; it is natural to meet with words from this sphere in the skalds' work. The situation is somewhat different in the poems of the *Poetic Edda*, which were to a certain extent produced by a different, certainly lower, social class. This difference is clear in the usage of *rekkr*. The genitival *Rangbezeichnung* is found three times, twice in the heroic poetry (*HHj.* 18, *Guðr.* I.19, vs. *Vkv.* 29). To this might be added *rekka Húna* (*Guðr.* 2.15), with a gen. plur. instead of the gen. sing. found everywhere else; in this passage, however, *rekkar* may simply refer to 'warriors' and 'retainers,' as is frequent in heroic texts from the *Poetic Edda*. It is found in *Akv.* 17, *Am.* 65, and *HHj.* 22. The mythological texts, however, often employ *rekkr* with a general meaning 'man,' as in *Hvm.* 49, *Hrbł.* 8, *Hdl.* 3, and *Alv.* 5. The latter is perhaps not a trustworthy example, with its emphasis on varying vocabulary; *rekkr* there is a stressed, alliterating word (*hvat er þat recca, / er í ráðom telz / flióðs in fagr glóa*) and, therefore, employed under considerable constraint. *Gríp.* 6 is the only exception to the hypothesis assigning martial, institutional meaning to the heroic texts and more general meaning to the others. It is, however, a late poem and of lesser importance in this context.

The usage in the *Poetic Edda* is therefore consistent with the conclusion based on the earlier skaldic material that *rekkr* could be and was used to designate the member of the *comitatus*; the division between 'retainer' and 'man,' coinciding with the broad division within the *Poetic Edda* itself of heroic and mythological texts further suggests that *rekkr* was known as an institutional term by the warrior classes who largely were responsible for skaldic poetry and as a 'general' term by other

classes.

The general meaning is also found in the old alliterative phrase *rekkr ok rýgr* 'man and wife' from the *Frostapingslag* (see *NGL* 1.209), and perhaps in the ONw. legal term *rek(k)s þegn*. This expression, or compound, refers to a man of a certain social rank, specifically lower than a *hauldr* (*hǫldr*) or *árborinn maðr* but above a *leysingi*, based on a schedule for payment of fines described in *NGL* 1.172 and 173. Although Hertzberg (*NGL* 5: s.v. *reks þegn*; 1889: 227; 1890: 226-270) argued repeatedly that the first component was to be regarded as a verbal abstract from *reka* and the whole expression to be interpreted as 'vagabond,' Konrad Maurer (1890) advanced the counterproposal that the first component was from *rekkr* 'man,' and that the whole expression referred to a freeborn man (*þegn*) who for lack of household voluntarily entered the service of another man (*rekkr*). Current scholarship, however, has challenged Maurer's assumption, which necessitates postulation of the *rekkr* as a lord with his own followers, a supposition for which there is no evidence. Recent suggestions by Norwegian scholars have associated the *rek(k)s þegn* with the *setr-gårdene* (A. Holmsen 1961: 1.183), or, in a return to Hertzberg's interpretation, with powerful Lapps and the practice of *reindrift* (Bjørkvik 1969). Such men represented 'ei næringsgruppe som hadde kontakt med dei bufaste bøndene, og som lova difor måtte fastsetja reglar for.' Whatever the origin of *rek(k)s þegn*, it is clear it had nothing to do with the term *rekkr* 'warrior.'

Rekkr, then, replaced *draugr* at an early date as a technical term referring to the members of the *drótt*. This agrees with Kuhn's suggestion that the expression *Hálfs rekkrar*, because it is fixed and without parallel, must be based on historical usage, and that, therefore, in eighth century Norway a king's men were

called *rekkr* (1944: 117). Similarly, Kuhn's examination of the use of WGmc. *rinc(h)* convinces him that although the term was not a current *Rangbezeichnung* in WGmc., it apparently had been at an early date, at least in pre-*Hēliand* Germany (1944: 118). Kuhn's chronological ordering of the lexical system, with *rekkr/rinc(h)* the oldest *Rangbezeichnung*, agrees with and supports my findings that this term provided the replacement when *draugr* went out of use as a technical term denoting the member of the *comitatus*.

This state of affairs appears to have prevailed until the great changes of the early eleventh century, when the term *drótt* was replaced with *hírð*. At the same time, new terminology developed for the individual members of the *hírð*, which will be discussed. Meanwhile, other terms were active in various ways within this lexical system, words which denoted individual free men or warriors. Two of these must be discussed, since it has been suggested that they, too, were part of the vocabulary of the *comitatus*.

drengr and *þegn*

Svend Aakjær (1927) first argued that the terms *þegn* and *drengr* in EN, particularly Da., runic inscriptions referred to royal retainers. His argument is based primarily on evidence from England, where it can, in fact, be shown that such is the case. For EN, however, the supposition is, as Aakjær readily admits, impossible to prove. But, if anything, the evidence argues against it.

If *drengr* and *þegn* ever were technical terms in contemporary WN, this usage left no trace in the language of the skalds. A *drengr* was simply a man, often a young man. Finnur Jónsson (1931a: 85-86) glosses it with 'ung mand, især rask og håbefuld,

svend, mand; yngling; dreng,' and examination of the usage shows this definition to be accurate, although the sense 'warrior' also occurs, as in Eg. Lv. 8 *drengja lið* to refer to a band of warriors, or in Am. 50: *Dóttir lét Gíúca drengi tvá hníga, bróður hið hon Atla*. The word is rarely used in Kuhn's sense of the *Rangbezeichnung*, with a genitive overordinate (the figures, it will be recalled, were eight such attestations from a total of one hundred and twelve). *Þegn*, too, shows little sign of having been a technical term. The essential meaning in skaldic poetry is demonstrably 'man, free man, man in general.' The figures arrived at by Kuhn were six attestations as *Rangbezeichnung* from a total of seventy-two occurrences. Although this ratio is slightly higher than that of *drengr* (1:12 versus 1:14), the difference is hardly striking. In the passages where *þegn* might refer to a retainer (Finnur Jónsson's gloss: 'om mænd der hører sammen eller som hørende til en enkelt som deres leder, . . . herfra er overgangen let til betydningen "undersåt," skönt denne er noget tvivlsom' [1931a: 637]) it is apparent that this is poetic, rather than technical usage. It is true that in later prose usage *þegn* (though not *drengr*) was used in the ONw. laws and particularly in the kings' sagas to refer to a liegeman. This usage, almost certainly borrowed from England, cannot be demonstrated in WN sources before the onset of the thirteenth century, and clearly is independent of the *comitatus*.

Nor do the etymologies evince any trace of the *comitatus*. *Þegn* (OE *þegen*, OHG *degan*) is a *-no-* participle from PIE **tek-* 'to bear,' cognate with Grk. τέκνον 'child' (Pokorny 1959: 1057). The etymology of *drengr*, a term limited to NGmc., is obscure, although both de Vries (1962: 82-83) and Pokorny (1959: 254) agree that it may represent PIE **dheregh-* 'to hold,

hold fast,' with nasal infix, the root itself being regarded as a guttural extension of **dher-* 'to hold.' The semantic development to 'young man' would be through an intermediate stage meaning 'stick, pillar.' This etymology, which cannot be regarded as fully satisfactory (and see Specht 1944: 1939), also has no connection with *comitatus* terminology. The fact that the word is only attested in Nordic, besides complicating the etymology, further removes it from any prospective Gmc. technical terminology. And the difficulties are increased by the apparent variation in stem formation between the EN and WN plural forms (*drengjar* versus *drengir*).

Despite these objections, Aakjær's thesis was accepted by others as well, e.g. Jacobsen-Moltke (1935: 190).

The answer must lie within the inscriptions themselves. In Denmark, *drengr* is attested twenty times in Viking Age inscriptions, *þegn* fifteen times. Paradigmatic of the form of these inscriptions is the following:

ǵstarþr : rasþi : stin : þasi : ǵftiR : iuta :

faþur : | : sin : harþa : | : kuþan þi | akn.

(D213, Skovlænge-stenen).

The great majority of these stones was raised by kinsmen or a *félagi* after dead men who regularly receive the attribute *harða góðr þegn/drengr*. Specifically, five of the *þegn* stones were raised to the memory of a father, three to a husband, one to a stepfather, and two or three to a brother. Among the *drengr* stones, five were raised to the memory of a *félagi*, four to a brother, two or three to a son, and one to an unspecified kinsman. One stone was raised by a man who called himself *drengr*, and two others may have been. None of these stones make any reference to a chieftain who might have been the lord over the *drengr* or *þegn*; none uses the genitive typical of the *Rang-*

bezeichnung. *Drengjar* is used three times in the plural, however, and in these cases, it seems to refer to a group of warriors in a semi-technical, or perhaps even colloquial way. An example is provided in the B. inscription of Hedeby 1:

. . . Þā trekiar satu um haipa bu. (D1).

Here the *drengjar* seem to be the warriors involved in the siege of Hedeby; but again there is no reference to a lord or leader of the *drengjar*. Hence this cannot be *comitatus* terminology.

Of the thirty-five attestations of *þegn* and *drengr* in Danish runic inscriptions, only four can possibly have anything to do with the *comitatus*. Three are *þegn* stones, one a *drengr* stone. Closer examination reveals, however, that of the three *þegn* attestations allegedly showing institutional usage, two may be dismissed outright. The first of these is D98, Bjerregravstenen (Sønderlyng hd., Viborg a.), in which the text is so damaged as to make a reading of the *þegn* usage impossible; the meaning of this inscription can only be a matter of speculation.

The second such stone is D277, Södra Villie-stenen (Rydsgård stenen), from Ljunits hd., Malmöhus län. The notion that it reveals institutional usage is based on a misconception. The stone was raised by a woman (called *Kata* in the inscription) after her husband Sven Ballungssøn, of whom it is stated: *saR uas þiakna furstr* 'he was foremost among (the?) *þegnar*.' This is alleged to show rank within the *hírð*, but such a notion is pure supposition. Based on the usage of the overwhelming majority of the inscriptions, *þegna fyrstr* should simply be interpreted as praise, 'best of men.'

That leaves two attestations of an institutional meaning. *Þegn* may be used in this way in the A line on the Glavendrup stone:

raknhiltr sa | ti stain þānsi auft ala saulua kupa

uial(i)þshaipuiar þanþia | kn.

This apparently contains the words *Véliðs heiðvarþan þegn* (or simply *liðs heiðvarþan þegn*), an apparent genitival *Rangbezeichnung*. The word *heiðvarþer* is attested in *Jyllands lov*: the *heiðvarþer* man is rich in honor and entitled to his own retainers.

Drengr attests possible institutional usage on D345, the Simris stone, from Järestads hd., Kristianstads län:

sigrif | r : let resa sten : þensa : aiftiR furkun

if -- r faður : asulfs : triks : knus . . .

The stone is raised to the memory of a certain Forkun, who is noted as the father of Asulv, *tríks knus*. This seems to be *drengs Knúts*, although who the Knútr is cannot be known. At any rate, he must have been a fairly important chieftain in order for his *drengr's* father to gain fame from the relationship (*DR* column 389-390).

These are the statistics in Denmark. Two possible institutional attestations are found in a total of thirty-five occurrences of the terms *þegn* and *drengr*. It is obvious (particularly in light of the WN evidence as well) that neither term was technical or institutional; neither can have made up part of the vocabulary of the *comitatus*. Instead, they seem to have been moral terms (Steenstrup 1927: 67 note) or perhaps ethnic terms (see Kuhn 1944: 111). Their clear approbative value is evident in the often encountered formula *harða góðr drengr/þegn*, indicating that the man being honored by the stone displayed the manly virtues to the right extent. Such a conception must have been central to the WN abstracts *drengskapr* 'bravery, manly virtue' and *þegnskapr*, the latter attested in *Grágás* in the expression *at leggja undir þegnskap sinn* 'to swear witness on one's manly honor or worth' (*Grágás* 1883: 698). Beginning with Wimmer it has been suggested that the semantic difference be-

tween the two terms *drengr* and *þegn* consisted in the age or marital status of the persons referred to; the latest proponent of this plausible hypothesis has been K. M. Nielsen (1945). As he points out, most of the *drengr* stones commemorate a *félagi* or brother (the word *bróðir* may, however, also refer to a *félagi*) or sometimes a son, whereas most of the *þegn* stones commemorate a father or husband. The *þegn* thus seems to have been the older, established, married man and the *drengr* the young, unmarried warrior. The latter agrees in large part with the definition of *drengir* given in *Snorra Edda*:

Drengir heita vngir menn bvlavsir, meþan þeir afla
ser fiar eþa orðztír, þeir fardrengir, er milli landa
fara, þeir konvngs drengir, er haufþingivm þiona,
þeir ok drengir, er þiona rikvm monnvvm eþa bõndvm;
drengir heita vaskir menn ok batnandi. (*Snorra Edda*
186-87).

The situation was well summarized by the poet of the *Rígs-pula*. The sons of Karl, the first free farmer,

hét Halr oc Drengr, Hǫlðr, Þegn oc Smiðr,
Breiðr, Bóndi, Bundinsceggi,
Búi oc Boddi, Brattsceggr oc Seggr. (Rp. 24).

It is within this sphere that *drengr* and *þegn* belong. They are part of the large, free middle class of farmers who made up the backbone of old Scandinavian society. During the High Middle Ages the term *þegn* was raised, under English influence, to the level of the king's liegeman, but in WN only, where English influence was strongest. Otherwise the terms *þegn* and *drengr* never had anything to do with the *comitatus*.

Þegn and *drengr* must also have differed, as Kuhn has suggested, (1944: 119 ff.), on a chronological basis. *Þegn*, with its WGmc. and IE parallels, must have been significantly older than *drengr*,

which is attested only in NGmc. This is also suggested by the lack of an EN place name **drengjaby* in the face of such attested place names as *Rinkeby*, *Tägneby*, *Karleby*, and so forth. The distribution of these place names, incidentally, reveals further chronological information. E. Elgqvist (1947: 123) pointed out that Uppland is the center of the *Rinkeby* names, while Östergötland, Dalsland, and Bohuslän represent centers of intensity of *Tägneby* names, although the two names often occur together, particularly in the *Tägneby* area. It therefore appears that the **rinker* names are older than the **pegn* names, the introduction of **rinker* names into the **pegn* areas having occurred simultaneous to the expansion of the Svea kingdom into Götaland. This furnishes further support for the chronological ordering of the *comitatus* field, with first *draugr*, which is eventually lost in EN, and then **rinker*, which is also very old and leaves traces in EN only in ancient place names.

Pegn and *drengr* did not make up part of Nordic *comitatus* terminology. That this is so for ODa. is particularly obvious. An additional fundamental argument exists: there was a different term that denoted the member of the *hírð* in the runic inscriptions of the Da. Viking period: *hempægi*. Its obvious formation, *hem* plus *-pægi* 'he who receives' (note *arvpægi* 'heir') is based on the metaphor of the king's court as a great family; it represents a specifically Da. reaction to the problem of creating new terminology for the new institution of the medieval king's court. It is therefore parallel to the term *hírðmaðr*, the ONw. solution to the same problem.

hempægi

The term *hempægi* is attested altogether six times in the Da. runes. In each case (except perhaps once, where the text appears

to be deceptive) the term is used with the genitive of another personal name, in other words as a clear *Rangbezeichnung*. Furthermore, the men called *hempægi* stood high on the social scale; in two of the inscriptions the *hempægi* is a king's man:

þurlf × risþi × stin × þansi × | × himþigi × suins
eftiR × | erik × filaga × sin . . . (D1, Hedeby 1).

The Sveinn referred to in this inscription is most likely King Sven Tveskæg (ca. 982-1000?). That this is so is shown by Hedeby 3:

suin : kunikR : sati : | : stin : uftiR : skarþa |
sin : himþiga : ias : uas : | : farin : uestr : ian :
nu : . . . uarp : tauþr : at : hipa : bu.

D154 (Torup-stenen, from Vang sn., Hundborg hd.) refers to a *him(þ)iki : saga : iutis*, the last part of which appears to be a personal name, although it defies interpretation. However, this may represent a false reading, since the original is lost and the text retained only in AM 367 fol. from ca. 1627. In the other inscriptions the *hempægi* clearly appears as a retainer: D155 (Sjørind stone, from Hundborg hd., Tiborg amt) refers to a *himþiki : finulfs*, D296-297 (the Hällestad stones from Torna hd., Malmöhus län) twice to a *him : þiki : tuka* (genitive of Toki). *Hempægi*, then, was a specifically Danish formation, which probably preceded the beginning of the eleventh century if indeed the Hedeby stones refer to Sven Tveskæg. This is answered by the other native Danish formation *þing(a)lið*, which denoted the collective. Thus Denmark met the problem of creating new *comitatus* terminology with formations based on native materials, whereas Norway, which was perhaps more open to foreign influence, solved the problem with the loan of *hírð* and *hírðmaðr*.

hússkarl

Another term based on native elements, which is found in

both EN and WN, is *húskarl*. The formation of this term is paralleled by several other terms, all of which employ *hús-* as first component and a noun referring to rank as a second component. Among the compounds formed in this way are *húsbondi* 'master, husband,' *húsdrottinn* 'master of a house,' *húsfaðir* 'house-father, master (*paterfamilias*?),' *húsfreyja* 'housewife, lady, mistress,' *húsgumi* 'house-master,' *húsherra* 'house-master,' *húskona* 'housewife,' *húsmóðir* 'mistress (*materfamilias*?),' and *húsvörðr* 'houseward, i.e. watchdog.' The second component of *húskarl* is a frequently attested simplex in the various NWGmc. languages meaning 'man,' apparently of moderate or even sometimes low social standing (note OE *ceorl* 'lower class freedman'). *Karl* is not used institutionally in Nordic, except perhaps in the Eddic expression *karls ætt* found in *HHund. II* and, predictably, in *Rþ*. Otherwise, *karl* usually represents 'man' as opposed to 'woman,' as in the fixed alliterative expression *karl ok kona*, or sometimes 'older man,' with which sense it is used of Óðinn. Similarly it is found as a personal name. As second component *-karl* combined with *bú-* and *land-* to form the terms *búkarl* and *landkarl*, both of which mean 'farmer,' again placing the term *karl* squarely in the middle of the social scale. On the basis of its formation, therefore, *húskarl* would be expected to mean 'household worker, housedweller, household servant.'

The earliest datable attestations of *húskarl* in Scandinavia are found in the poetry of Sighvatr Þórðarson. In the following *lausavísa*, for example, *húskarl* is related to *lánardrottinn* 'liege lord,' here the superior in the relationship:

þollr, fekk húskarl hollan
 —høfum ráðit vel báðir—
 látrs, enn ek lánardrottin,

linns blóða, mér góðan.

O generous man, you have got a loyal servant (*húskarl*),
and I a lord (*lánardróttinn*) who is good to me; we
have both chosen well. (Sigv., *Lausavísa* 3).

This stanza was inspired by the gift of a sword to Sighvatr. As he enters into the *hirð* relationship, the poet calls himself a *húskarl* and his lord a *lánardróttinn*. The two terms are clearly complementary antonyms within the *comitatus* relationship. If we accept the stanza as genuine, therefore, it is apparent that by the time of Sighvatr's earlier *lausavísur*, in other words, around the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century, the term *húskarl* was already current to describe the retainer. The term must have had fairly good connotations, since Sighvatr uses it to describe himself. The important nature of the *comitatus* relationship, loyalty of the retainer and generosity of the leader, is also stressed in this stanza.

In another stanza of Sighvatr, the generosity of a chieftain, or, strictly speaking, his duty to maintain his retainers well, is mentioned:

Þik bað, sólar sökkvir,
sinn halda vel, Rínar,
hvern, es hingat árnar,
húskarl, nefi jarla.

The nephew of jarls asked you, O generous king, to
take good care of each of his men (*hvern húskarl*) who
comes here. (*Austrfararvísur* 18a).

The expression used here, *halda vel hvern húskarl*, is, as we will see, also found in EN poetry from the Viking Age. On the basis of the two passages quoted here, which are among the earliest Nordic attestations, it is apparent that the lord and his *húskarlar* stood in a close relationship characteristic of the *comi-*

tatus. This is proved by a third stanza of Sighvatr, where the *húskarlar* are actually equated with the *hírð*. This occurs in Sighvatr's *Lausavísa* 18, where *hilmis Hgrða húskarlar* in the first helming is parallel to *hírð hans* in the second.

These three early strophes from the poetry of Sighvatr Þórðarson thus in each case employ the term *húskarl* institutionally. Such institutional usage is the rule without exception throughout the earlier skaldic attestations of the term. Oddr kíkínaskáld (*Dikt om Magnus den gode* 2), for example, uses the term in a stock scene describing the weeping of the *húskarlar* after the fall of their lord; Haraldr harðráði (11) and Þjóðólfr Arnórsson (*Magnúss-flokkur* 12) in identical lines assign the *húskarlar* to leaders bearing the title *jarl*. Genitival usage indicative of a *Rangbezeichnung* is the rule, too, as in the strophe of Oddr kíkínaskáld (*húskarlar grams*), as well as in Þórvaldr blönduskáld (*Sigurðardrápa* 1: *húskarlar þínar*) and *Plácitúsdrápa* (36: *sína húskarla*), both of which stem from the twelfth century. Similarly, Hallar-Steinn employs *hírðmenn konungs* and *húskgrlum sínum* as parallel expressions in the two helmings of *Rekstefja* 13, indicating synonymy. In short, the skaldic evidence emphatically presents the term *húskarl* as 'member of the *hírð*, i.e. *hírðmaðr*.' That the *hírð* is at question, and not the *drótt*, is indicated by the chronology of the attestations; they begin in the work of the very skald who also first used *hírð*, Sighvatr Þórðarson.

Nevertheless, the meaning 'retainer' is not universal for the term *húskarl* in WN. In most saga prose, when used in contexts outside the Norwegian court, a *húskarl* is a simple manservant, as opposed to *bóndi* or *húsbóndi*, as in this late thirteenth century Norwegian example: *Nu ef huskarlar bonda hitta hval a have ut* (*Hertug Haakon Magnussons Retterbod for Færøerne*, Oslo, June 28, 1298; NGL 3.37). Such usage is universal in the Icelandic sagas

when referring to Icelandic conditions, as for example *Halli var húskarl under Felli* (an ordinary Icelandic *húsbóndi*; *Sturlunga saga* 1.55). It may also be noted that in the elder Gulapíng law the expression *húskarlserfð* is attested, which seems to refer to the rights of inheritance after an heirless *húskarl* accruing to his master or *húsbóndi*. In the later Middle Ages in Norway, however, only men of the highest social level could have *húskarlar*: *Hirðskrá* limits them to kings, *jarlar*, and *lendir menn* (art. 19; *NGL* 2.407), though it is clear from later amendments to the laws that both chieftains and bishops were also entitled to *húskarlar* (these amendments are found in *NGL* 3.83 and 160). From its thirteenth century Icelandic perspective, *Snorra Edda* reports the following:

Konvngar ok iarlar hafa til fylgþar með sér þa menn,
er hirðmenn heita ok hvskarlar, en lendir menn hafa
ok sér handgenga menn, þa er iDanmorkv ok iSviðioð
erv hirðmenn kallapir, en iNoregi hvskallar, ok
sveria þeir þo eiþa sva sem hirðmenn konvngvm.
Hvskarlar konvnga varv mioc hirðmenn kallapir
ifornesko. (*SE* 162).

Which sense of *húskarl* was the original, 'retainer' or 'man-servant?' The etymology suggests the latter but is contradicted by the skaldic evidence. Nevertheless, skaldic poetry was the product of the highest social class, indeed of a special warrior group, and was often unlikely to reflect everyday linguistic usage accurately. The skaldic poetry proves that the term *húskarl* was used of royal retainers by the early eleventh century, but it does not disprove that the word may simply have been used of servants, as its etymology suggests, on a lower level; on this point, the skaldic evidence remains silent.

Here the *Poetic Edda* is helpful. The term *húskarl* is attested

in two poems, *Atlakviða* and *Atlamál*. Since both are heroic poems, it has generally been assumed, so far as I know, that *húskarlar* in both refers to retainers. In *Am.* 30, there can be no doubt that such is the case. The poet is describing the journey of Gunnar and Hogni to Atli's court:

fóro fimm saman, fleiri til vóro
hálfu húskarlar, hugat var því illa.

(*Am.* 30.5-8).

The lines *fleiri til vóro/hálfu húskarlar*, which probably are to be interpreted 'more were available by half, i.e. ten' (Dronke 1969: 122-123), clearly refer to retainers, namely the warriors making up the expedition. Three of these are named in lines 9-12 of the same stanza. That they are of high social standing is without doubt: two of them are the sons of Hogni.

In *Atlakviða* the term *húskarl* is employed twice, both times near the end of the poem. In strophe 39, Guðrún, having served up her sons to Atli, enriches the *húskarlar* with gold.

Gulli seri in gaglbiarta,
hringom rauðom reifði hon húskarla.

(*Akv.* 39.1-4).

Here it would make no sense for her to enrich Atli's retainers, whom she later is to burn to death (*Eldi gaf hon þá alla, / er inni vóro*; *Akv.* 42.1-2). It is possible that she is bribing the servants in order to make easier the murder of Atli, or perhaps she is simply intensifying Atli's ruin by scattering his wealth to his servants, a destructive insult. It should also be noted that the scene of a woman giving gold to servants is found elsewhere in WN literature, as when Bergþóra does so before the burning in *Njáls saga*. In any case, *húskarlar* must mean 'servants' here. And such is the case even more obviously in the second attestation of the term in this poem, which occurs two stanzas

later:

Hon beð broddi gaf blóð at drecca,
hendi helfússi, oc hvelpa leysti;
hratt fyr hallar dyrr, oc húskarla vacpi,
brandi, brúðr, heitom; þau lét hon giöld bræðra.
(*Akv.* 41).

The lines *oc hvelpa leysti* and *oc húskarla vacpi* are paratactic parallels, 'brief statements of Guðrún's mercies interwoven with her acts of murder' (Dronke 1969: 72). Here again the term *húskarl* must refer to servants.

Atlakviða is one of the oldest poems in the *Poetic Edda*, *Atlamál* one of the younger. I suggest that in their use of the term *húskarl* they reveal two chronological layers: *Atlakviða* uses the word with the older, original, etymological sense 'servant,' whereas the younger poem has incorporated the courtly, institutional use of the word typical of the later Viking Age, the sense with which the skalds used it. The sense found in *Atlakviða*, which lived on in WN prose, must be regarded as original, and the passages in that poem, assuming the validity of the MS tradition, may then be accepted as the oldest attestations of the word *húskarl*.

All indications are that, contemporaneous to the introduction of institutional use of *húskarl* in WN, the word was used in the highest circles in Denmark. The most important piece of evidence for this is found, again, in Sven Aggesøn's *Lex Castrensis* (*supra* 65 ff.). Members of the *Tinglith* seeking redress from their fellows could have the case heard in the presence of the king, before all the other warriors, in a proceeding called the **húskarlastefna: in præsenti regis, uniuersis commilitonibus corrogatis, in colloquio, quod dicitur Huskarlesteffne* (*Scriptores* 76-77). The second component is clearly the ON legal term

stefna 'summons,' found throughout the older Scandinavian laws; it developed from an earlier meaning, still retained in skaldic poetry, 'meeting.' The **húskarlastefna* is thus to be regarded as 'meeting/summons of retainers,' and *húskarl* as the term used within the *Tinglith* to denote its members. It is fairly certain that Sven Aggesøn has retained older terminology here, since the word *húskarl* was apparently otherwise extinct in the ODa. of the thirteenth century, when he wrote; such at least is the testimony of the dictionaries (Kalkar, Lund, etc.). It therefore appears most likely that the term *húskarl* was raised to the highest social levels within the Danish (and Dano-English) court of the early eleventh century.

This is the most important piece of evidence for the use of *húskarl* in early eleventh century Denmark. Another piece of circumstantial evidence has been pointed out, in a different context, by A. Olrik (1903: 103). In his discussion of *Bjarkamál*, Olrik notes that this name for the poem may not have been original, but that the other name the poem bears, i.e. *Húskarlahvøgt*, is likely to be older; Saxo, for example, calls it *exhortationum series* in his Latin paraphrase in *Gesta Danorum*. The poem is most likely of Danish origin, probably from the mid-tenth century, dealing as it does with Böðvarr Bjarki and the last battle of Hrólfr kraki. From the account of Þormóðr kolbrúnarskáld's recitation of the poem before the battle of Stiklastaðir, found in *Heimskringla*, it seems the author wished to incorporate a piece of tradition, namely, that the poem *Bjarkamál* was also known as *Húskarlahvøgt*. He does not know why it is called by that name, so he invents an explanation. After Þormóðr has recited the two stanzas which the author has introduced as the beginning of *Bjarkamál*, the following reaction is described: *Þá vaknaði liðit. En er lokit var*

kvæðinu, þá þgkkuðu menn honum kvæðit, ok fannsk mgnnum mikit um ok þótti vel til fundit ok kglldu kvæðit Húskarlavgt (Óláfs saga helga 362). It is a well-known characteristic of saga style that when the author records a passage like the above, where motivation is based on general opinion (*fannsk mgnnum mikit um ok þótti vel til fundit ok kglldu. . .*), he is generally either giving his own opinion or passing on something which he has obtained from (oral?) tradition. If an original name of the poem, which originated in Denmark, was *Húskarlavgt*, this suggests that the term *húskarl* was in use in Denmark to denote the member of the *comitatus*.

A similar important piece of evidence concerning the Danish provenance of the technical use of the term *húskarl* is its usage as a loanword. *Húskarl* is not natively attested in any other Gmc. language but was, however, loaned into OE (Björkman 1902: 214). It seems to make its first appearance at about the time when it begins to appear in Nordic texts, i.e. the beginning of the eleventh century. There can be little doubt that the word was loaned from ODa. and entered England via the Danelaw: it consistently has the form *huscarl*, never **husceorl*, the form the word would take if original in England. It is attested in South English diplomas (see *Cod. Dip.*) and in the *Chronicle*, where precise information on dating and historicity is of course available. In all, the term *huscarl* is attested five times in the *Chronicle*. The first two, from 1036 and 1041, refer to *huscarlas* who are specifically followers of King Harðacnut, the son of Knútr the Great and his queen Ælfgyfu-Emma. In the passage from 1036E, the *huscarlas* are simply retainers who accompany Harðacnut's mother: *man gerædde þa þet Ælgifu Hardacnutes modor sæte on Win ceastre mid þæs cynges huscarlum hyra suna*. In the second, the context indicates that

the *huscarl* had a high standing with the king and was active in the collection of taxes: *Her let Harðacnut hergian eall Wihra-ceastre scire for his twegra hus carla þingon ðe þæt strange gylð budon* (1041C). In the remaining attestations the *huscarlas* adhere to other great men: Earl Siward and King Eadward (1054D), Earl Tostig (1065C) and Earl Osbearn (1070E). 1065E in a parallel passage refers to Tostig's *hiredmenn*, indicating partial synonymy with *huscarlas*, and in 1070E the retainers are identified specifically as Danish: *Þa Densca hus carles*. Eadward's *huscarlas* are mentioned in a few other sources (Hofmann 1955: 220), but there is no doubt that the loan was temporally and geographically limited to the Danelaw (Steenstrup 1882: 136).

The word *húskarl* was apparently also used as a term denoting a follower of a socially prominent man in Sweden as well. The evidence is from the runic period; *húskarl* left no trace in later OSw. The material itself is rather scanty. Only three inscriptions, all from Svealand, employ the term.

The first is U330 (Snottsta, Markims sn.):

× inka × lit × raisa × staina × auk × bro × kiara
 × æftiR × raknfast × bont × a × sin × asur × uar
 × huskarl × hans.

Transl. Inga let ræisa stæina ok bro gærva æftiR
 Ragnfast, bonda sinn. Assurr var huskarl hans.

Ragnfast was apparently a wealthy farmer. His wife Inga, who subsequently became a powerful woman, erected this stone and a bridge in his memory. She also raised three other stones (U329-332) in which various other close relatives are mentioned. This prompts the editors of *Runverket* to note *Förmodlingen har Assur varit den rike storbonden Ragnfasts välbetrodde man. Och han nämnes därför jämte de närmaste fränderna i de inskrifter, som Inga låter utföra*. Though the leader of the *húskarl* in this

case is hardly a king, it is nevertheless obvious that the *húskarl* belonged to fairly high social circles in eleventh century Uppland. This is also shown by U335 (Orkesta kyrka):

ulmi × lit × risa × stin × þina × uk × bru × þisi ×
iftiR × iru × faður × sin × uskarl × sifruþar.

Transl. Holmi let ræisa stæin þenna ok bro þessi
æftiR Hæru (?), faður sinn, huskarl Sigrððar.

This inscription, which the editors of *Runverket* number among 'de tidigare i Uppland,' reveals clearly that the *húskarl* himself must have had a fairly high social position. In this case, the *húskarl* was important or wealthy enough for his son to be able to raise a cenotaph. The very fact that the son thought to include the information that the man being honored was another man's *húskarl* indicates the high social standing such a position must have afforded.

Both of these inscriptions use the term *húskarl* with the gen. indicating a *Rangbezeichnung* in Kuhn's sense of the word. Assur was Ragnfast's *húskarl*, and Hæra (?) was Sigrððer's.

The third inscription including the term *húskarl* is of great interest, since it employs the term in a poetic context, apparently parallel to a line in skaldic poetry. The entire inscription, Sö338 (Turinge kyrka, Öknebo hd.), is as follows:

ketil : auk + biorn + þaiR + raistu + stæin + þin[a] +
at + þorstæin : faður + sin + anuntr + at + brupur +
sin + auk : hu[skar]lar + hifiR + iafna + ketilau
at + buanta sin * brupr waRu þar bistra
mana : a lanti auk i lipi : uti : hiltu
sini huskarla : ui- han fial i urustu
austr i garþum lis furugi lanmanna bistr.

Transl. Kætill ok Biorn þaiR ræistu stæin
þenna at þorstæin, faður sinn, Annundr at

broður sinn, ok huskarlar æf(t)iR (?) iafna
 ('the just one?'), Kætiløy at bonda sinn.
 Brøðr vaRu þeir bæstra manna
 a landi ok i lipi uti,
 h[eld]u sin[a] huskarla ve[l].
 Hann fioll i orrustu austr i Garðum,
 liðs forungi, landmanna bæstr.

There are several problems with the reading of this inscription; the reader is referred to the discussion in *Runverket*. The above interpretation is identical there and may be accepted in this context. In the prose section it is indicated that the *húskarlar* were in part responsible for the raising of the stone, which indicates that these men must have had a fairly high social position. In the poetic section, it is reported that the brothers, presumably Þorstæinn and Annundr, took good care of their *húskarlar*; the expression *halda húskarla vel* answers to the same phrase in WN found in Sighvatr Þórðarson's *Austrfararvísur* 18. In this context, the lines *a landi/ok i liði uti* suggest that the *húskarlar* made up part of the *lið*. Thus, it would appear that they pursued both military and non-military activities, which corresponds closely to the definition of the *comitatus* given by Tacitus. *Húskarlar* were also found in military contexts in OE, and in the ODa. *Witherlagh* such seems to be the case. Similarly, *húskarlar* in the sense of 'retainers' are sometimes engaged in martial activity in WN.

The Swedish evidence, particularly Sö338, suggests that the distance *húskarl* had to rise in order to become an institutional term was not great. *Húskarlar* owe allegiance to their *bóndi*; this allegiance may take the form of martial activity. As one great court and army consolidated many smaller ones, certain terms grew, simultaneously, in scope and stature. One of these

was *húskarl*. It would seem likely that the initial elevation of *húskarl* to the institutional level took place in the EN area, perhaps in ODa., where the term is only used of king's men. The age of the term in Denmark is suggested especially by the name *Húskarlahvøgt*, with its heroic associations. It seems typical of Denmark that this area formulated new terminology on the basis of native material, i.e. *Tinglith* and perhaps, therefore, *húskarl*.

The breakthrough of the institutional use of *húskarl* is clearly associated with the circumstances behind the loan of the term *hirð* into Scandinavia as well. Alongside the collective *hýski*, it appears that ON may have used *hús-* to represent the structured, institutionalized family group, as in such compounds as *húsbóndi*; particularly important in this context is the term *hústing*. In certain ways, ON *hús-* may have paralleled the use of *hīred* in OE after the early loss in NGmc. of **hīwa-rēpa*. In formation of new terminology for the new, large courts in Scandinavia, the lack of a single term for the structured family, the model of the European court, must have been pressing. The various Nordic dialects took different steps to remedy the situation. ONw. borrowed the OE term *hīred* for the institution and *hīredmann* (> *hirðmaðr*) for the individual member, whereas ODa. created new terminology on the basis of native elements. One result of such formation was the collective *þing(a)lið*, the member of which could be called *þingmaðr*. Two other terms were also created, namely *hempægi* and *húskarl*, both based ultimately on the notion of the extended family as a social collective. *Hempægi* never spread beyond Denmark, nor was it assimilated into later stages of the language. *Húskarl*, on the other hand, was productive and reached a new center of intensity in Norway. There, along with *gestr*, also a native term, it was assimilated into the specialized terminology of the Norwegian court of the High Middle Ages.

Chapter 5.

Honor and Comitatus

So far we have investigated the primary vocabulary of the Gmc. and Nordic *comitatus* and the individuals who formed it. Other institutional relationships may characterize the *comitatus*, however, and therefore we should look for a complete understanding of this complex social institution and its various concepts. In this chapter we will investigate the concept of honor, so vital to the *comitatus* and to all Gmc. society. We will examine the interactions of the social institution of honor and that of both the **druhtiz* and the *hirð*.

**aizō*

The Gmc. term for honor must have been **aizō* (fem.). It survived in the various dialects as follows: OE *ār(e)* 'honor, glory, rank, kindness, mercy, property,' OS, OHG *ēra* 'honor, respect, aid, protection,' ON *eir* 'clemency, mercy, peace, rest,' *Eir*, a minor goddess generally limited to woman kennings, apparently associated with medicine and healing. Snorri says of her *hon er læknið best* (*Snorra Edda* 38). ON also attests the derivative *eirð* 'clemency, mercy,' an abstract participial formation < **aiziþo* < **ais-i-tā*.

Many dialects also show denominative verbs formed from the same root: OE *ārian* 'to honor, admire, care for, pity,' OHG *ērōn*, *erēn*, *eren* 'to honor,' OS *ēron* 'to support, present,' ON

eira 'to spare, have mercy,' Goth. *aīstan* 'to fear, hold in awe or reverence.' It is generally assumed that this form shows the root **ais-* with dental extension (Karg-Gasterstädt 1948), although this is questionable (see below). The base form for the NWGmc. verbs must therefore be **aizōn/*aizian*; as noted above, the root may have been extended in Goth.

The IE etymology of the root poses a difficult problem indeed. The standard view, as presented in Pokorny (1959: 16), is to postulate a root **ais-*, based on the above NWGmc. evidence. The Italic forms cited by Pokorny, i.e. *aisusis* (ablative pl.) 'sacrificiis,' *aisos* (nom. pl.) 'dii,' *aisis* (dat. pl.) 'diis,' *esaristrom* 'sacrificium,' and *esono-* 'divinis, sacer,' are surely to be regarded, as Pokorny suggests, as Etruscan loans (see Ernout 1961: 84 for support of the Etruscan origin of these terms, including ancient references as e.g. in Suetonius). The root itself may be pre-Italic. At any rate, besides the Gmc. forms, it is generally assumed that the root **ais-* appears with dental extension in, besides Goth. *aīstan*, Grk. αἰδομαι 'to feel shame; respect, reverence,' αἰδώς 'shame, modesty, fear,' and the Skt. verb *īdē* 'honor, glorify.' The Greek forms supposedly show assimilation, viz. **ais-d-* > **aiz-d* > *aid-* (Solmsen 1902: 137). The Sanskrit verb has zero-grade vocalism and a similar assimilation. The assimilation proposed for the Greek forms, although undoubtedly present in the language, is sporadic at best: indeed, αἰδομαι and αἰδώς and their alleged etymological relationship with the Gmc. forms are the major piece of evidence in support of such an assimilation in Greek (see Hirt 1912; art. 228; Frisk 1960: s.v. αἰδομαι). As Lejeune points out in his classic treatment of Greek phonology (1947: art. 100), PIE **sd* > Grk. *zd*, written with *zeta* 'dès l'adoption de l'alphabet.' Nowhere does Lejeune mention the assimilation which would associate the Greek words in

question with a PIE root **ais-*.

That leaves Skt. *īdē* and the Gmc. forms. Taken together they do not provide sufficient evidence to warrant postulation of a PIE etymology.

heiðr, vegr, tīgn

Whatever the origin of Gmc. **ais-*, it is clear that in Nordic it underwent a special development. In the other Gmc. dialects the concept of honor is a basic underlying semantic component, but in Nordic we find only 'mercy, clemency.' The term *ēra* 'honor' entered Scandinavian as a MLG loan. In ON the semantic field of honor is covered by the following lexical terms: *heiðr, vegr, tīgn, sómi, sæmð, virðing, frami, vegsemð, metorð, metnaðr, and hǫfuðburðr*. Since nearly all the members of this complex lexical system are limited to NGmc., it seems highly probable that the concept of honor obtaining among the Norsemen was different from the common Gmc. notion.

Three of the words which came to describe honor in Nordic in place of Gmc. **ais-* are descended etymologically from a common semantic concept. These are *heiðr, vegr, and tīgn*. As most etymological dictionaries hint, and as has been proposed as early as 1894 by Koegel and clarified by Palmér (1930) for *heiðr* and *vegr*, these words must descend from PIE roots meaning 'shining, gleaming, bright, clear.'

More specifically, *heiðr* < PIE **skai-(t/d)-*, as illustrated by the following cognates in the daughter languages: Skt. *ketas* 'form, picture, sign,' *ketus-* 'brightness, picture, sign,' *ce-tati* 'appear, notice,' *citrā* 'clear, bright,' Lith. *skaidrūs* 'bright, clear,' Latv. *skaidrs* 'bright, clear, pure,' OCS *čistŭ* 'pure.'

That this meaning survived into Gmc. is clear from: OE *hādor*

'clear, bright,' OHG *heitar* 'clear, bright,' OS *hēdar* 'clear, bright,' and adjectives with *-ro-* suffixal formation, ON *heiðr* 'bright, clear, cloudless,' a primary adj., and *heið* (neut.) 'bright, clear weather.' Apparently, from the very beginning the notion of 'shining, gleaming, clear' was still associated to the Gmc. root **haid-*, ultimately to become ON *heiðr* 'honor.'

As Palmér and others have pointed out, the development of *vegr* is parallel to that of *heiðr*. The following cognates are attested in German: OHG *wāhi* 'gleaming, beautiful,' MHG *wehen* 'to gleam, shine.' It would appear therefore that Nordic *vegr* 'honor' represents a development from a root meaning 'shining, gleaming' (for further particulars on this root, including the semantic shifts it underwent, see below).

Turning briefly to ON *tīgn* 'honor, high birth,' we may assert that it represents a guttural extension of the frequently encountered PIE root **dei-* 'bright, shining.' The many variations of this root will be discussed in relation to *tīrr*.

tīrr

In NWGmc. the man renowned for his glory was described with the adj. *mærr*; the glory he possessed was called *tīrr/tīr*. The adj. clearly descends from a Gmc. prototype, as the various Gmc. cognates attest: Goth. *(waila-)mēreis* 'well-sounding, praiseworthy,' OE *mære* 'famed,' OS, OHG *māri* 'famed, illustrious,' etc. An etymology often suggested, although it is unsatisfactory on a semantic basis, is that these words reflect the PIE root **mē-* 'large.' L. Mittner (1955: 139 ff.) has proposed a more satisfactory solution. Briefly, he sees a crossing between the PIE roots **mē-* 'large' and **mer-* 'to shine, glisten,' which appears in the following etyma in addition to Gmc. **māriz*: Grk. *μαρμαίρω* 'shine,' Lat. *mērus* 'pure, clear,' and English

mere. We may accept this etymology with the provision that English *mere* is actually a Latin loan and hence does not descend directly from PIE **mer-*. Probably the most convincing piece of evidence for this etymology is the semantic parallelism in OS of *māri* and *berht* 'bright, shining.' Such parallelism shows, when coupled with the etyma cited above and by Mittner, that the adj. *mærr* 'glorious, famous,' is located within the semantic field of 'bright, shining.' Now note too the ON term *mærð* < **māriþō* < **mēr-i-tā*, an abstract parallel to e.g. *sæmð*. *Mærð* has the base meaning 'praise, fame, glory,' but in skaldic poetry it also has the specialized meaning 'encomium, panegyric.' This is surely a reference to the kind of heroic battle poetry in which a warrior's glory lived on after his death; as such it may give us a good clue to what *orðstírr* really consisted of, as, for example, in the famous lines of *Hávamál* 76:

Deyr fé, deyr frændr,
deyr siálfr it sama;
enn orðstírr deyr aldregi,
hveim er sér goðan getr.

As has been pointed out, poetic encomia probably made up part—indeed, an important part—of the *comitatus* relationship.

ON *tírr* and WGmc. *tīr* may, according to Pokorny (1959: 183 ff.), be traced back to PIE **dei-ro*, an *-r-* extension of a base root **dei-* 'to shine clearly, glow, glimmer.' Some of the more important multiforms of this root and their descendants are:
**Diues*: Skt. *divasa* 'day,' **diuio*: Skt. *divya* 'heavenly,' Grk. *δῖος* 'godlike, noble,' Lat. *dīus* 'holy,' *Diāna*, a goddess;
**deiyos-*: Skt. *deva-* 'god,' Av. *daēva* 'demon,' Lat. *deus*, *dīvus* 'god,' Gaulic *Dēvona*, a goddess, OIr. *día*, 'day,' OPr. *deiwas* *dievas* 'god,' ON *Týr*; **dieu-*: Skt. *dyauh* 'heaven,' Grk. *Ζεὺς*, Lat. *Juppiter*, *diēs* 'day.'

It appears that the notion of divine gleaming is essential to this root, since many of the cognates either mean 'holy' or 'god' or are actually the names of gods or goddesses. Among the latter it will be noted that Diana is a moon goddess and that Juppiter, Zeus, and Týr are sky gods, which again suggests divine gleaming or shining. Insofar as *tírr*/*tīr* is formed from the same root complex, we can posit that *tírr* underwent a development in meaning parallel to that of *heiðr*, *vegr*, *tígn*, and *mærr*: shining or gleaming (in the case of *tírr* perhaps the divine gleaming of the gods) was used for the personal regard paid to men known as having 'honor' and 'glory.' Besides *tírr*/*tīr*, we find this root, with a semantic shift from 'shining' to 'beautiful,' in OHG *ziari*, OFr. *tīre* 'decoration' (note the OHG vocalism). In Nordic the original notion of shining was also retained: ON *tírr* 'shining,' a rare poetic word, and the modern forms NNw. *tira* 'to sparkle,' *tir* 'gleam,' and Sw. dial. *tira* 'to gleam.'

On the basis of the Nordic forms, which retained the notion of gleaming, coupled with the parallelism of OS *māri* and *berht* as discussed by Mittner, we must accept the possibility that the notion of gleaming or shining was part of the semantic component of at least *māri* in OS and *tírr* in ON. That this was apparently the situation also in ancient Indian society for the notion of glory is shown by the following stanza from the *Ṛgvedasamhitā*:

yé me pañcāśātaṃ dadúr
 áśvānāṃ sadhástuti
 dyumád agne máhi śrávo
 brhát kṛdhi maghónāṃ
 nṛvád amṛta nṛṇām.

Der freigebigen Herren, die mir fünfzig Rosse geschenkt
 haben unter einstimmigen Lobe, deren Ruhm mach
 glänzend, gross, hoch, O Agni, männerreich, du

Unsterblicher.

(*Rig Veda* 5.18.5, Geldner's translation).

Note that in this stanza a god is invoked to increase the glory of humans. Since divine gleaming was the province of the gods, this is altogether apt, especially in this case, since Agni was the god of fire.

Similar development may also be found in Latin, where the notion of shining or gleaming seems to be encroaching on the semantic field of glory, as in *clārus* 'clear, shining, glorious, renowned.' One example of such usage, among many, is found in Tacitus' *Agricola* 29:

iamque super triginta milia armatorum aspiciebantur,
et adhuc adfluebat omnis iuventus et quibus cruda ac
viridis senectus, clari bello et sua quisque decora
gestantes.

This by no means suggests that IE glory or honor was based on the notion of shining or gleaming, but it does suggest rather that NWGmc. may have carried out a potential tendency already present in PIE and therefore sporadically attested at least in Skt. and Lat. in addition to Gmc.

In his recent book on IE poetic language, R. Schmitt (1967: art. 166) draws the following conclusion:

Der Ruhm der Männer war gemein-indogermanisch, aber die konkrete Vorstellung dieses Ruhmes in den Einzelsprachen hat sich verschoben: das homerische Ideal des 'Männerruhmes' liegt in den Heldentaten des Betreffenden (letztlich seiner *aretē*) begründet, das vedische Ideal des 'Ruhmes' besteht—zumindest aus der Sicht des Dichter-Priesters—in dem Besitz und Reichtum des Opferherrn und natürlich in dessen Liberalität.

To this might be added that the Gmc., and particularly the NGmc.,

notion of human glory was based on the notion of gleaming or shining, perhaps the divine gleaming of the gods.

Such gleaming was strongly associated with battle. This is shown clearly by the usage of *tīrr/tīr*, which was obtained on the battlefield. OE *tīr*, for example, which is limited to poetry (thus indicating age), is first attested in *Beowulf*:

Hwæt, we þe sælac, sunu Healfdenes,
leod Scyldinga, lustum brohton

tires to tacne, þe þu her to locast. (*Beo.* 1652-54).

The *sælac* 'sea-booty' referred to is of course Grendel's head and the golden hilt of the sword Beowulf acquired in his under-sea battle with Grendel's dam. The battle context is clearly specified by the speaker, Beowulf, in line 1656 with the words *wigge under waters* 'in battle under the water.' The sea-booty serves as a sign (*to tacne*) of the glory won in this battle.

This is the oldest attestation of *tīr* as simplex in this oldest of OE poetic monuments, but the term occurs three times in compounds which are of some interest. The military nature of *tīr* is, I think, present in all three, though to varying extent. In *Beo.* 837-46, for example, which describes the immediate aftermath of the hero's battle with Grendel, the monster is described as *tīrleas*. In other words, as a result of his defeat in battle, he is 'bereft of glory.' Klaeber glosses the term *tīrleas*, as far as I know attested only in this passage, with 'inglorious, vanquished.'

The next occurrence of a *tīr*- compound is perhaps not so clearly military in nature, but it is important in showing the link between this complex and the *comitatus*. In describing Hroðgar's royal procession to Heorot to greet the triumphant Beowulf, the poet states that *Hroðgar . . . tryddode tīrfæst getrume micle/cystum gecyþed* (*Beo.* 922-23). The word *getrum*

'army' clearly provides the military overtones, but note that this is a chosen troop (*getrum cyst*). The accompaniment of this troop makes the king *tīrfæst*. In other words, he gains glory from their presence. This provides a direct reference to the *comitatus* relationship and is reminiscent of the famous words of Tacitus: *in pace decus, in bello praesidium*.

The other *tīr*- compound is found in a proverbial expression in lines 2188-89: *Edwenden cwom/tireadigum menn/torna gehwylces*. Here *tīr-eadig* and *torn* appear to be partial antonyms; the context does not permit further specification.

From later OE heroic poetry come two passages which show particularly clearly that *tīr* was won in battle:

Her Aþelstan cyning, eorla dryhten,
beorna beahgifa, and his broðor eac,
Eadmund æpeling, ealdorlangne tīr
geslogon æt sæcce sweorda ecgum . . .

(*Battle of Brunanburh* 1-4).

The second is from lines 103-104 of the *Battle of Maldon*:
Ða wæs feohte neh,/tīr æt getohte.

In NGmc., too, it is apparent that *tīrr* was obtained in battle. Nowhere is this more clearly stated than in *Hamðismál*, which is certainly among the oldest poems in the *Poetic Edda*:

Vel hqfom við vegit, stqndum á val Gotna,
ofan, eggmóðom, sem ernir á qvisti;
góðs hqfom tīrar fengið, þott scylim nú eða í gær deyia,
qveld lifir maðr ecci eptir qvið norna.

(*Hamðismál* 30).

Similarly, Einarr skálaglamm's *Vellekla* (12b), from the eleventh century, represents *tīrr* as the outcome of battle, the prerogative of the victorious:

Ok forsnjallir fellu

fúrs í þróttar skúrum
 (þat fær þjóðar snytri)
 þrír jarls synir (tírar).

And the very brave ones slew three jarl's sons in
 battle (that brings glory to the prince of the people).

Tírr/tír, then, was a special kind of glory, i.e., martial glory. That this was so in Norse is further emphasized by the etymological relationship between *tírr* and the god *Týr*. Despite his claim to being the only god of the Nordic pantheon bearing a name which can be traced back to PIE, *Týr* is a somewhat shadowy figure in the mythology. Nevertheless, Snorri introduces him with the words:

Sa er en ás, er Tyr h(eitir); hann er diarfaztr ok bezt hvgaðr ok hann ræðr mioc sigri i orrostom; a hann er gott at heita hreystimonnvm. Þat er orðtak, at sa er tyhravstr, er vm fram er aðra menn ok ecki setz fyrir. (*Snorra Edda* 32).

Thus the gleaming sky god, in this case perhaps also a god of contract, if Dumézil (1959 etc.) is correct, became also a god of battle as divine gleaming became an essential part of the notion of martial glory among the Gmc. peoples. In the North a further refinement was carried out, and, as the etymologies reveal, the semantic fields of martial glory and honor overlapped; in other words, martial glory became a kind of honor. Such honor, which may be called the honor of martial glory, must have been an important part of the *comitatus* relationship.

sómi and sǣmð

Contract, or law, represents the need within a society for adherence to its codes, in order that the society may function. Indeed, it is virtually a prerequisite for the existence of a

society. In Nordic a second form of honor, based on this need, developed. The terms originally denoting this kind of honor in ON are *sómi* and *sæmð*. Both descend from the same root, i.e. Gmc. **sōm-* < PIE **sām-*. The two terms must have been partial synonyms at one time; they differ in that *sómi* is an *-n-* stem whereas *sæmð* is formed with the secondary abstracting extension **i-tā-*. There are also verbs formed from this root, namely *sóma* and *sæma*; the former means 'to befit,' the latter 'to honor,' indicating that it is probably denominative (< **sōmjan*). The most revealing IE cognates are Skt. *sāman* 'the same,' Av. *hāma* 'the same,' Skt. *hāman-* 'calm, peaceful, tranquil,' OIr. *sām* 'rest' and *sāim* 'restful, mild.'

On the basis of semantic comparison among these cognates it appears that **sōm-* was applicable to the man whose actions conformed to acceptable social standards and did not ruffle the calm of society. This notion is extended in the following cognates from the Gmc. dialects: OE *sōm* 'arbitration, agreement,' *gesōm* 'unanimous, friendly, peaceable,' *sēman* 'fitting, suitable, appropriate,' and MHG *suome* 'agreeable, pleasant, friendly.'

Since *sómi* and *sæmð* denote 'honor' in ON, there can be little doubt that adherence to the social standard was elevated to an ethical norm in Scandinavia.

Other terms for honor found in ON texts are late, clearly secondary formations with transparent etymologies of little value in the reconstruction of Nordic ethics or institutional practice. Typical of these are *virðing* and *høfuðburðr*. The former is formed secondarily from *verð* 'value, price.' It is a neutral term and in reality means not so much 'honor' as mere 'esteem.' Nevertheless it is worth recalling *verðung* 'comitatus,' formed from the same word. Partial equation between 'honor/esteem' and the *comitatus* is therefore suggested. *Høfuðburðr* apparently

stems from the Norse proclivity for expressing the whole man, metaphorically, in terms of the head. Thus there are ON terms such as *hǫfuðbani* 'death, destruction,' *hǫfuðgjarnt* 'fatal, dangerous,' *hǫfuðlausn* 'ransom,' *hǫfuðmundr* 'reward for the killing of an outlaw,' *hǫfuðórar* 'delirium,' *hǫfuðvgrðr* 'body-guard,' and *hǫfuðærr* 'insane.' Further it is assumed that the expression *bera hátt hǫfuðit* found in *Njáls saga* is parallel to or involved in the formation of *hǫfuðburðr* as a term dealing with honor or esteem. If such is the case the term itself must be extremely late and hence can reveal nothing about the institutions of honor or the *comitatus* in early Scandinavia.

Metnaðr and *metorð* are secondarily formed from *meta* 'to measure' and hence refer to estimates of a man's worth; *frami* is of course almost literally 'forwardness.' None of these terms helps to illuminate the *comitatus*.

By the time of the earliest Scandinavian written texts, distinctions between the honor of martial glory and the honor of social utility were no longer sharply maintained. This is shown by the high frequency of passages in which words originating from each of the kinds of honor are used as synonyms, as in: *margs var allz sómi, / manna tíginn* (*Atlamáll* 94), *gera þat i heiðr ok tign við honum* (*Flateyjarbók* 1.564), or *gera til heiðrs ok sæmðar* (*Stjórn* 95). Such passages clearly show that little distinction was felt among the various honor words.

Nevertheless it is possible to state that most occurrences of words of the *sómi* family deal with the proper giving of gifts, entertainment, food, and so forth; in short, with the carrying out of proper actions in given social situations. A few examples are: *þeir bræðr þqkkuðu konungi þann sóma er hann veitti þeim* (*Egils saga* 96), *leiðangrs-görða ok annars konungligrs sóma er þér erut skyldir at veita* (*Fornmannasögur* 7.19), and *eigi er*

á kveðit, hvé mikit fé henni skyldi heiman fylgja, en líkklígt at vera myndi góðr sómi (*Íslendingasaga* 393). Note, sómi is often granted (*veita*) from one person to another; frequently by a king or queen. Subjects are obliged (*skyldr*) on occasion to grant sómi to the ruler: in the example from *Fornmannasögur* 7. 19 it is a levy for an army. The role of the royal levy in the Nordic *comitatus* has been discussed. Here it is apparent that sómi as the honor of social utility could be applied to this phenomenon, indicating a high degree of interaction between the institutions of honor and the *comitatus*. The passage from *Íslendingasaga* 393 reveals further that wealth (*fé*) might qualify as sómi. Here it is important to consider a passage from *Hrólfs saga kraka* 45: *Vil eg sækja heim þann kong sem meira söma vill til ver gígra enn þu, þui jlla hefur þu launað mier landugrn, og slykan sigur sem vier hqfom yður vnnid.* It is clear that in these lines sómi refers to a reward, almost to wages, for a job well done, in this case defence of the land and victory in battle. The importance of the honor of social utility is clearly illustrated. Because the king has not properly carried out his social duties by giving due reward to a retainer, the retainer leaves the king's service. In effect, this represents the potential breakup of society if its contracts are not heeded; in this case the *comitatus* relationship is shattered. This may be contrasted with the following passage from *Hænsa-Þóris saga*, where, in the transformed world of the Icelandic Family Saga, sómi still serves to create social bonds among men:

Ok þó skal ek gefa þér gjafar ofan á, því betri ok meiri sem þú ert meira verðr en Þórir, ok svá mikinn skal ek þinn sóma gera, at þat sé allra manna mál, at þú sér vel sœmðr af. (22).

At this point, it may be instructive to consider the usage of

the verb *sóma* 'to befit, beseem.' In large measure it is characterized by the same situation and concerns as the noun *sómi*.

Thus:

. . . vil eg fáá hrýnginn þann sem bestur gripur er
j þinni eigu, og við villdum báðir eiga. H(elgi)
s(agdi), eij sömir annad frændi enn þu fáir hrijng(inn)
viðst . . . (*Hrólfs saga kraka* 24).

On the whole, however, the vocabulary of Nordic is confused in this case, and the honor of social utility originally denoted by *sómi* has by the time of the written texts become confused with other honor words as well, words which descend from the semantic field of martial glory. Thus a man honored for the proper giving of gifts may be described as a *heiðmíldr maðr* and called by the noun *heiðmaðr*. Furthermore, there are even cases where the term *tírr* denotes concrete items such as gifts of weapons or even entertainment.

It is, furthermore, difficult to find texts in which heroes win honor from battle. This suggests that by the literary period the honor of social utility had displaced the honor of martial glory. Old literature presents a clear ethical distinction between the two kinds of Nordic honor, with the honor of social utility clearly more highly regarded. An excellent example of this is provided by *Þorsteins þáttr stangarhoggss*, which Theodore M. Andersson (1967: 6) has called 'a paradigm of the structure to be found in the family sagas.' In this *þáttr* the honor of martial glory, as sought by Þórhallr and Þorvaldr, the two mischief-makers, as well as by Bjarni's wife and by Þórarinn, Þorsteinn's father, is ridiculed. The two modest, moderate protagonists, representatives of the honor of social utility, clearly come off best in the story.

Indeed, the interplay between these two kinds of honor is a

central concern of the *Íslendingasögur*. In Anderssonian terms, we may state that the honor of martial glory is paramount through the *revenge* section of the saga and indeed forms the essence of the conflict; but it is the honor of social utility which finally prevails in the *reconciliation* section of the saga. Thus the saga may be described as a move from martial glory to social utility. The honor of the latter was apparently regarded as socially preferable, since it releases the narrative tension built up by adherence to the almost outmoded code of the honor of martial glory. Andersson himself has, with different terminology, pointed out this distinction (1970).

In the relative chronology of the two kinds of Nordic honor, it appears that the honor of martial glory is the older of the two. It has IE parallels and is mentioned by the classical observers Caesar and Tacitus, both writing more than a millenium before the earliest Scandinavian written texts are recorded. *Haiðra* is attested on both Stentoften and Björketorp (Krause nos. 96 and 97), but as the readings of these stones are far from clear, it is best to leave this issue aside, with the provision that no form of **sōm-* appears on any runic inscription whatever. Finally, the fading in importance of the war and sky god Týr, and his metamorphosis to a god of contract, may reflect the relative chronology of the two concepts of honor in the North. Týr's fading is roughly parallel to the growth in importance of Þórr in West Scandinavia and Freyr and assorted fertility gods in East Scandinavia. Þórr, as culture hero, and Freyr, as fertility figure, work for the maintenance of society. This too may be a faint reflection of the replacement of the honor of martial glory by the honor of social utility.

Finally, we should discuss the conflation of honor words in Nordic. There appear to be three reasons for it.

One reason might well be rigid adherence to the blood feud. One of the main aspects of the honor of social utility would have consisted of keeping faith to one's kinsmen by avenging their deaths. This would most often be done in battle, where it was possible to win the honor of martial glory. Thus in a battle fought for the sake of a blood feud the two kinds of honor could easily become mixed. This would have occurred at an early date, i.e. during the Proto-Gmc. period, since the blood feud is assumed to date back at least to that time (see e.g. de Vries 1945).

A later complicating factor must be Christianity. Medieval Christendom, which entered Scandinavia at about the time the term *hírð* did, had its own notions of honor, none of which coincided even remotely with the pagan Scandinavian situation. To a Christian, honor was primarily what was due to God; man's duty was to be humble. Thus, in writing about Christian honor, men were faced with a wide variety of words from which to choose in order to express this new concept. As far as we can determine, words expressive of both the honor of martial glory and the honor of social utility were chosen indiscriminately. For example, *vegr* is found in *Flateyjarbók* (1.112, 2.380): *til vegs guði* and *tígn* in *Reykðæla saga* (47) *gera skaparnum tígn*. Representative of the use of words expressive of the honor of social utility is the following line from *Lilja* (25): *Móðir oss er Mária þessi, / mektar-blóm ok full af sóma*.

The most important factor, however, may well be the *comitatus* relationship. By fighting bravely for his leader, a retainer was entitled to receive *sómi* in the form of money, gifts, and so forth; this was his due for fulfilling his half of the bargain, i.e. for doing what was socially proper and required. The chieftain, too, was bound by the same bargain. But besides *sómi*

from the leader, a brave warrior could also receive some form of the honor of martial glory for his services, which consisted in large part of martial activity. This might therefore have contributed to a conflation of the Nordic honor vocabulary.

The Gmc. *comitatus* probably characterized primarily the honor of martial glory. The *comitatus* after all was called into being as an institution of martial necessity. It was first and foremost on the battlefield that the individuals who made up the *comitatus*, including even the chieftain, won the honor and glory which typify this social institution. Indeed, this kind of honor was one of the major forces behind the creation of the institution and its ability to survive through the centuries. Membership in the *comitatus* was not, of course, necessary for winning the honor of martial glory. It was available to all who trod the battlefield. Indeed, it was initially the prerogative of the individual. The Gmc. *comitatus* is thus to be regarded, with respect to the institution of honor, as a collective of individuals who gain honor through martial glory.

The honor of social utility, on the other hand, requires peaceful social interaction among individuals. It is therefore more a social than an individual matter. It almost certainly was less important than the honor of martial glory for the early Gmc. *comitatus*. However, we saw that the later Nordic *comitatus*, specifically the *hírð*, is essentially a non-military domestic arrangement, incorporated by means of a complex structure; the individual was meaningful only insofar as he fit into this structure. Characteristic of the later Nordic *comitatus* therefore was the honor of social utility. This is apparent in the opening lines of the *Hírðskrá*:

I þess hins sama vars herra Ihesus Christus
namfne skal var loghlegr Noreghs konungr hans

þion raða boðe oc banne oc utform varom innan
lands oc utan guði till dyrðar ser til soemðar
oss til gagns oc þarfenda.

Note too that sections 13 and 17 of the *Hirðskrá* explain what *sæmð* the *hertugr* and *jarl* are to receive from the *hirð* relationship: these generally include the rights to do certain things.

Furthermore, we have noted that *sómi/sæmð* was characteristic of kings and their dealings with subjects, thus indicating that the honor of social utility was an important part of the *hirð* relationship. But the honor of social utility, like the honor of martial glory, was not limited to the *comitatus* or *hirð* but available to all full-fledged members of society (though not, of course, to slaves or thralls).

The relationship between the two kinds of honor and their interactions with the *comitatus* parallels the chronological development of the institutions we discussed. We have suggested that the honor of martial glory is older than that of social utility; the older kind of honor adhered to the older kind of *comitatus*, the **druhtiz*. The *hirð*, on the other hand, appropriated the newer kind of honor, the honor of social utility.

Bibliography

NOTE: The following principles have been adopted in alphabetizing Scandinavian names: -ǫ- and -ð- are treated as -a-, -æ- as -ae-, -ø- and -ϕ- as -o-, -æ- as -oe-, and -ð- as -d-. -þ- is placed after -z-.

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Index Verborum

Proto-Indo-European

*ais- 127 128
*dei- 129 130
*dei-ro- 130
*deiṛos 130
*dher- 108
*dheregh- 107
*dhereugh- 18 88 91
*dhreugh- 90 94
*dieu- 130
*diues- 130
*diṛio- 130
*kei-ṛo- 42 43
*koi-m- 42
*lēi- 71
*leit(h) 71
*mē- 129
*mer- 129 130
*reg- 96
*sām- 136
*skai-(t/d)- 128
*tek- 107

Sanskrit

cetati 128
citrā 128
deva- 130
divasa 130
divya 130
drogha- 94
drūh 94
dyauḥ 130
hāman- 136
īdē 127 128
ketas 128
ketus- 128
rādhnōti 44
rādhyati 44
rāja 96
sakhā 43
sāman 136
śeva/śiva 43

- Avestan*
 daēva 130
 draoga- 94
 hāma 136
 (para-)raēth- 71

Tocharian
 lit- 71

Greek
 αἰδώς 127
 αἰδομαι 127
 δῖος 130
 λοίτη 71
 μαρμαίρω 129
 οικοδεσπότης 42
 στρατεία 19
 στρατεύεσθαι 19
 συνέκδημος 12 13
 συνοδία 13
 τέκνον 107
 Ζεὺς 130

Latin
 ceius (Old Latin) 42
 cīvis 42
 cīvitas 42
 clārus 132
 comes 12 17
 comitatus 1 10 11 *et passim*

 deus 130
 Diāna 130
 diēs 130
 dīus 130
 dīvus 130
 dominus 39
 domus 39
 gens 39
 ire 12
 Juppiter 130
 materfamilias 45 114
 mērus 129
 palatium 45
 paterfamilias 45 114
 rēx 96
 tribunus 39
 tribus 39

Italic
 aisusis 127
 aisos 127
 aisis 127
 esaristrom 127
 esono- 127

Gaulic
 Dēvona 130

Old and Middle Irish
 aurddrach 94
 dia 130

sāim 136	<i>Proto-Germanic</i>
sām 136	*ais- 127
	*ais-i-tā 126
<i>Old Prussian</i>	*aiz- 128
deiwas 130	*aizō 126
dievas 130	*aizōn/*aizjan 127
draugi- 18	*aiziþo 126
draugiwaldunen 18	*draugaz 85 90 93 94
drūktai 18	*draugi 90
podrūktinai 18	*dreug- 40, 85
	*dreugan 20
<i>Latvian</i>	*drinkan 20
draugs 91	*driug- 90
skaidrs 128	*driugan 84 85 86 93
	*drugi 90
<i>Lithuanian</i>	*drūht- 20
draūgalas 18	*druht 19 20 21 23 25 31 40 79 80
draūgas 18 91	*druhtinaz 39 40 93
drauge- 18	*druhtiz 17 18 38 39 40 49 84 93
draugè 18	95 126 143
draugýbe 18	*druknu- 90
skaidrùs 128	*drunht- 20
	*drunh-ti-s 20
<i>Old Church Slavonic</i>	*(ga-)druhtiz 19
ěistŭ 128	*gangan 71
drugŭ 18 91	*ga-sinþ- 12 17
drugy 18	*gasinþa 13
družina 19	*gasinþi 13
	*gasinþja 13
<i>Slovenian</i>	*gasinþs 13
družína 19	*haid- 129

*haim- 42	gardawaldans 42
*herðian 56	*gasinþa 12 13
*hīwa- 42 43	*gasinþja 12
*hīwarēða 42 43 44 125	heiwafrauja 42
*hīwiskia 43 44	kindins 39
*kindiz 39	-leiþan 70
*līþ- 70 72	lekeis 13
*liþa 72	siponeis 13
*līþan 71 72	(waila-)mēreis 129
*māriþō 130	
*māriz 129	
*mēr-i-tā 130	<i>Old High German</i>
*ranka 96	bileite 71
*rēþa- 42 44	degan 107
*rinkaz 96	ēra 126
*sinþ- 12	erēn/eren/ērōn 126
*som-/*sōm- 136 140	gasind 12 14 15
*sōmian 136	gasindo 12 15
*werþungō 83	gisindi/kisindi 12 15
	gisindo 12
<i>Gothic</i>	heitar 129
asneis 13	hīrat 42 43 44
aistan 127	hīun 43
drauhtinassus 19	hīwo/hīwa 43
drauhtinon 19	hīwisci 43
drauhtiwitop 19	ingesinde 38
driugan 18 19 84	inkneht 38
faran 70	leita 71
gadrauhts 19	leitī 71
gaggan	līdan 70 71
galeiþan 70	māri 129

rāt 42
 rätslagōn 44
 rinch 96
 triogan 94
 trocken 89 90
 *truht 21
 truhtigome 20
 truhting 20
 *truhting 20
 trūt 21
 uzlit 72
 wāhi 129
 ziari 131

Langobard

troctingus 20

Middle High German

getroc 94
 hīrat 42 44
 hīrātbrief 44
 hīrāten 44
 hīrātguot 44
 hīrātliute 44
 hīrātstiure 44
 hīwisch(e) 44
 suome 136
 truht/druht 18
 trūt 40
 wehen 129

Middle Low German and Middle Dutch

ēra 128
 ghedroch(t) 94
 hisch (hisk) 44
 huwessche (huusche, husch) 44
 rank 96

Old Frisian

dreegh 18
 dructe 20
 hīskthe 44
 tīre 131

Old Saxon

berht 130 131
 bidriogan 94
 druht- 18
 druhtfolk 18
 druhting 20
 druhtscepi 18
 ēra 126
 ēron 126
 gidrōg 94
 gisīð 12 15
 gisīði 12 15
 hēdar 129
 hīwiski 44
 līthan 70
 mārī 129 130 131
 rād 42
 rinc 96 103

<i>Dutch</i>	(ge-)dreogan 18
droog- 90	(ge-)dryht/driht 17 21 22 23 24
huwelijk 43	25 31 36
huwen 43	gehealdan 48
lijden 71	gesīð 12 14 15
	gesīða 12 14
<i>German</i>	gesīðcund 14
Heirat 42	gesōm 136
Leid 71	getrum 133 134
leiden 71	guð-frece 87
Rat 42	guð-rinc 87
	hādor 128
<i>Old English</i>	halgian 47
ār(e) 126	heaðo-rinc 87
ārian 126	hearra 69
beadu-rinc 87 103	higegedryht 24
bisceophīred 52	hilde-freca 87
ceorl 114	hilde-rinc 87
cyning 45	hīred 42 52 55 58 59 60 64 67 69
dreogan 84 85 87	125
dryge 90	hīredcniht 51
dryhtcwen 20	hīred-menn 50 51 122 125
dryhtealdor 20	hīwisc 44
dryhtealdorman 20	hūs 45
dryhten 39	huscarl 121 122
dryhtguma 20	*husceorl 121
dryhthall 40	inwerod 38
dryhtlic 20	lædan 48
dryhtmaðum 20	lid 72
dryhtsele 20	lid (Middle English) 76
folcgedryht 24	līpan 70 71

- lið 72
 mære 129
 magugedryht 24
 medusele 98
 nunnhired 51
 preosthired 51
 ranc 96
 rinc 96 103 106
 sælac 133
 scir(ge-)driht 22
 sēman 136
 sibbegedryht 24
 sibgedryht 24
 sōm 136
 tīr 131 133 134 135
 tir-eadig 134
 tīrfæst 133 134
 tīrleas 133
 torn 134
 weana 86
 weorð 83
 weorðung 83
 weorðungdæg 83
 weorðungstow 83
 werod 24 25
 wifhired 51
 wilgedryht 24
 þegen 107

Old Norse
 árborinn 105
 berdraugr 88
 bið 72
 bīða 72
 bóndi 116 124
 bróðir 111
 brúðarbekkr 101
 búkarl 114
 dǫglingr 32
 draga 85 94
 dramb 34
 dramblátr 34
 draugr 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91
 92 93 94 95 96 105 106 112
 drengr 50 97 106 107 108 109
 110 111 112
 drengskapr 110
 *drjúga 84 85 86 88 91
 drjúgr 18
 drjúgum 18
 drótt 17 19 26 *et passim*
 dróttinn 19 39 61 62
 dróttkvætt 20 31
 dróttlátr 34 35
 dróttmegir 33
 drýgja 18 84 85 86 87
 Eir/eir 126
 eirð 126
 eira 127
 é1 89 92
 éldraugr 89 92
 falla 73

fé 138	hirðisif 55
félagi 108 111	hirðmaðr 55 56 57 58 112 113 116
flesdrótt 35	125
frami 128 137	hirðmannastefn 63
geirdrótt 35	hirðprúdr 56
gestr 36 57 58 125	hirðstofa 57 59
gramr 53	hirðsveit 19
grið 50	hirðvist 56
gumi 32	hjón 43
gunn-spjót 87	høfuðærr 137
halr 84	høfuðbani 137
harri 69	høfuðburðr 128 136 137
háseti 61	høfuðgjarnt 137
hauldr (<i>cf.</i> høldr) 105	høfuðlausn 137
heið 129	høfuðmundr 137
heiðmaðr 139	høfuðórar 137
heiðmildr 139	høfuðvörðr 137
heiðr 128 129 131	hølðr 84 103
heraðsdrótt 35	hús 51 114 125
herðidraugr 92	húsbondi 114 116 117 125
her-drengr 87	húsdróttinn 114
herdrótt 35 87	húsfaðir 114
herr 60 77	húsfreyja 114
hersir 28	húsgumi 114
hertugr 57 143	húsherra 114
hilmir 77	húskarl 36 51 57 58 113 114 115
hirð 36 38 41 <i>et passim</i>	116 117 118 119 120 121 122
hirða 56	123 124 125
hirðbyskup 57	húskarlserfð 117
hirðiáss 55	húskona 114
hirðidraugr 55	húsmóðir 114

- hústing 125
 húsvörðr 114
 hýski 44 125
 inndrótt 35 36 37 38 39
 jarl 116 117 143
 karl 114
 konungsgarðr 57
 lánardróttinn 61 114 115
 landkarl 114
 lát 34
 leið 71
 leiða 71
 leiðangr 79 80
 leiði 71
 lendr maðr 57 117
 leysingi 105
 lið 60 70 72 73 74 75 76 77
 78 79 80 81 83 124
 líða 70 72
 lit 72
 líta 72
 mæð 130
 meta 137
 metnaðr 128 137
 metorð 128 137
 mikillátr 34
 mjǫðrann 98
 óðaldraugr 92
 ógnir 103
 orðstírr 130
 þrlǫg 87 88
 þrlygi 86 89
 ráð 42
 ræsir 98
 *rakklátr 34
 rakkr 96
 rándrótt 35
 reka 105
 rekk 84 96 97 98 99 100 101 102
 103 104 105 106
 rek(k)s þegn (ONw.) 105
 seggr 84 101
 sinni 12 15 16
 skáli 59
 skyldr 138
 soema 136
 soemð 128 130 135 136 137 143
 sóma 136 139
 sómi 128 135 136 137 138 139
 141 143
 stefna 120
 sveinn 101
 sverðberendr 88
 tǫgn 128 129 141
 tírr 129 130 131 133 134 135 139
 Týr 130 135
 Væringjalið 70 76
 vǫpnþing 70
 vegr 128 129 131 141
 vegsemð 128
 veita 138
 verð 83 136

verðung 38 41 81 82 83 136	wipærlaghsræt 65
vígdrótt 35	wiperlagh 63 65 124
virðing 128 136	þing(a)lið 70 113 125
ýdrótt 35	
harða góðr þegn/dreng 108 110	<i>Old Swedish</i>
liðs heipvarþan þegn 110	*drotensäte 62
Véliðs heipvarþan þegn 110	drotsäte 61 62
þegna fyrstr 109	drotten 61
þegn 84 97 103 105 106 107	drýgher 18
108 109 110 111 112	hirðdränger/hirþdränger 66
þegnskapr 110	hirð-garðer 66
þing 70	hov 69
þing(a)lið 76	hundaren 79
þingmaðr 66 125	kirkiudroten 61
þingmannalið 66	landboe 61
þjóð 28 39	ledunger 79 80
þjóðinn 39	lith 79
	*rinker 112
<i>Old Danish</i>	tira 131
arvpægi 112	uti 73 74
heipvarþer 110	
hem 112	<i>Swedish Dialects</i>
hempægi 112 113 125	dröger 94
hirdman 66	dröste 62
hirdh 64 67	drösteborst 62
hov 69	
*húskarlastefna 119 120	<i>Norwegian</i>
jorþædrotæn 61	draug 94
lagh 65	tir 131
tinglith 66 70 119 120 125	tira 131
wælið 80	

Faroese

dreygur 94

hiir (hirð) 63

Orkney

hirdmanstein 63

Place Names

*drengjaby 112

Karleby 112

Rinkeby 96 112

Rynkeby 96

Tägneby 112

